

# PHARMACY HEALTH FAVIR for COLD SORES

Active ingredient: *Famciclovir*

## Consumer Medicine Information (CMI)

This leaflet provides important information about using this medication. **You should also speak to your doctor or pharmacist if you would like further information or if you have any concerns or questions about using this medication.**

**Where to find information in this leaflet:**

- [1. Why am I using this medication?](#)
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## 1. Why am I using this medication?

**This medication contains the active ingredients Famciclovir.**

**This medication is an antiviral medicine used to treat recurrent outbreaks of cold sores in adults 18 years of age and over who have a normal immune system (the body system which fights against harmful bacteria, viruses and fungi).**

Cold sores are an infection caused by a virus called herpes simplex type 1 (HSV-1). The infection is most commonly acquired as a baby or child from contact with parents or relatives, often from kissing.

Cold sores usually begin on or around the lips, mouth, and nose as small red bumps that turn into fluid-filled blisters. Cold sores can be tender and painful. Many people who get cold sores know when one is coming by a tingling, burning, itchy or painful sensation or redness in the area. This can happen very rapidly.

After redness and swelling develop, blisters form. The blisters may weep or burst and this can be painful. Then a shallow ulcer and yellow crust form as the cold sore dries. The crust eventually falls off, exposing new pink-coloured skin. Generally, the sores heal without scarring. After the initial infection has healed, the virus becomes dormant in nerve cells.

Cold sores can be unpredictable. The virus can become active again in the body, even after many years, resulting in recurrent outbreaks. Even after many years, some people may experience recurring cold sores due to viral reactivation. Some common triggers to a cold sore may include:

- sun exposure

- stress
- fatigue
- menstrual periods
- fever
- illness
- dry chapped lips
- skin trauma
- a cold.

Although this medication does not cure the viral infection, it helps to relieve the symptoms and shorten the duration of an outbreak. The best results are obtained if the medicine is started as soon as possible after the onset of symptoms of a cold sore, such as tingling, itching or burning, or the appearance of the first signs, such as redness or swelling. This is when the virus is reproducing rapidly.

## 2. What should I know before I use this medication ?

### Warnings

**Do not use this medication:**

- if you have a problem with your body's immune system, which helps to fight off infections. Your pharmacist will refer you to your doctor in that case.
- if you have an allergy to famciclovir (the active ingredient), penciclovir (a related antiviral medicine) or any of the other ingredients listed at the end of this leaflet.
- after the expiry date (EXP) printed on the pack or if the packaging is torn or shows signs of tampering.

**Check with your doctor or pharmacist if you:**

- are over 50 years of age,
- have a problem with your body's immune system, which helps to fight off infections
- Have a problem with your kidneys
- Have diabetes, high blood pressure, heart problems, liver problems or other medical conditions.
- Have signs of an infection other than your cold sore.
- are allergic to any other medicines, foods, dyes or preservatives.

During treatment, you may be at risk of developing certain side effects. It is important you understand these risks and how to monitor for them. See additional information under [Section 6. Are there any side effects?](#)

### Pregnancy and breastfeeding

**Check with your doctor or pharmacist if you are pregnant or intend to become pregnant**

This medication should not be used during pregnancy unless necessary.

**Check with your doctor or pharmacist about taking this medication if you are breast-feeding or planning to breast-feed.**

Your pharmacist or doctor will discuss with you the potential risks of taking this medication during pregnancy and will also advise you if you should take this medication for Cold Sores while breast-feeding, based on the benefits and risks of your particular situation.

### **Use in the elderly**

**Do not take if you are over 50 years of age**

### **Use in children**

**This medicine is not recommended for use in infants, children or adolescents under 18 years of age.**

## **3. What if I am taking other medicines?**

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking any other medicines, including any medicines, vitamins or supplements that you buy without a prescription from your pharmacy, supermarket or health food shop.

**Some medicines may interfere with this medication and affect how it works. These include:**

- probenecid, a prescription medicine used to treat gout (a disease with painful, swollen joints, caused by uric acid crystals) and to increase blood levels of penicillin-type antibiotics
- raloxifene, a medicine used to treat osteoporosis (a disease which causes bones to become less dense, gradually making them weaker, more brittle and likely to break).
- medicines that can affect your immune system
- medicines that can affect your kidneys.

These medicines may be affected by this medication or may affect how well this medication works. You may need different amounts of your medicines, or you may need to take different medicines. Your pharmacist and doctor have more information.

**Check with your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure about what medicines, vitamins or supplements you are taking and if these affect this medication.**

## **4. How do I use this medication?**

### **How much to take**

- Follow all directions given to you by your pharmacist or doctor carefully.
- These instructions may differ from the information contained in this leaflet.
- The usual dose of this medication is three 500 mg tablets taken together as a single dose.

However, if you have problems with your kidneys and your pharmacist has referred you to your doctor to see if this medicine is suitable for you, your doctor may have recommended a different dose.

**Ask your pharmacist or doctor if you are unsure of the correct dose for you. He/she will tell you exactly how much to take.**

### **When to take this medication**

Take this medication for Cold Sores as soon as possible after the first symptoms (e.g. tingling, itching or burning) or signs (e.g. redness or swelling) of a cold sore appear.

Do not take the tablets if a hard crust has already formed on the cold sore.

Keep the tablets for the next episode.

### **How to take this medication**

Swallow the tablets whole with a full glass of water. They may be taken with or without food. It is not necessary to chew or crush the tablet.

### **How long to take this medication**

A single dose of this medication is all that is necessary for treating each episode of cold sores. Each pack of this medication contains enough medicine for one dose. A repeat dose during this episode is not recommended. If another episode of cold sores recurs, another dose may be taken. However, treatment should not be repeated within 7 days.

### **If you use too much of this medication**

If you think that you have used too of much this medication you may need urgent medical attention.

#### **You should immediately:**

- phone the Poisons Information Centre (**by calling 13 11 26**), or
- contact your doctor, or
- go to the Emergency Department at your nearest hospital.

**You should do this even if there are no signs of discomfort or poisoning.**

Taking too much this medication may affect the kidneys. In people who already have kidney problems it may, rarely, lead to kidney failure if their dose is not correctly lowered.

## **5. What should I know while using this medication?**

### **Things you should do**

Tell your pharmacist or doctor if your cold sore symptoms do not improve within a few days, or if they become worse.

If you become pregnant while taking this medication, tell your pharmacist or doctor.

If you are about to be started on any new medicine, remind your doctor and pharmacist that you periodically take this medicine to treat recurring episodes of cold sores.

Tell any other doctor, dentist or pharmacist who treats you that you periodically take this medicine.

### Things you should not do

Do not take less than the recommended dose of 3 tablets, unless advised by your doctor.

Do not give this medicine to anyone else even if their condition seems to be the same as yours.

Do not use it to treat any other complaints unless your doctor tells you to.

### Things to be careful of

If you are pregnant or breastfeeding, ask your doctor or pharmacist for advice before taking any medicine

### Things that may help your condition

Cold sores are contagious and the virus can be passed on from person to person through close physical contact or saliva, even when blisters are not present. The risk is much higher when the cold sore is visible, as the virus can be shed, making it easy to infect other people.

Take the following precautions to avoid spreading the virus:

- Keep the areas affected by the virus as clean and dry as possible
- Avoid touching or scratching the sore area as you may spread the virus on your fingers
- Do not share any objects that have been in contact with a cold sore (e.g. drinking glasses, eating utensils, or towels)
- Avoid direct skin-to-skin contact of the area with other people (e.g. kissing) until the cold sore has healed.

### Driving or using machines

**Be careful driving, operating machinery or doing jobs that require you to be alert until you know how this medication affects you.**

This medicine can cause dizziness, sleepiness or confusion.

### Looking after your medicine

- Keep your medicine in the original packaging until it is time to take it.
- Store your famciclovir 500 mg tablets below 25°C.

Follow the instructions in the carton on how to take care of your medicine properly.

Store it in a cool dry place away from moisture, heat or sunlight; for example, do not store it:

- in the bathroom or near a sink, or
- in the car or on windowsills.

**Keep it where young children cannot reach it.**

### Getting rid of any unwanted medicine

If you no longer need to use this medicine or it is out of date, take it to any pharmacy for safe disposal. Do not use this medicine after the expiry date.

## 6. Are there any side effects?

All medicines can have side effects. If you do experience any side effects, most of them are minor and temporary. However, some side effects may need medical attention.

See the information below and, if you need to, ask your doctor or pharmacist if you have any further questions.

### Less serious side effects

Less serious side effects	What to do
<p><b>Gastrointestinal related:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• abdominal pain</li> <li>• diarrhoea</li> <li>• nausea (feeling sick) or vomiting</li> </ul> <p><b>Head and neurology related:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• headache</li> <li>• dizziness</li> </ul> <p><b>Allergy related:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• itching or an itchy rash (urticaria)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Speak to your doctor if you have any of these less serious side effects and they worry you.</b></p>

### Serious side effects

Serious side effects	What to do
<p><b>Allergy related:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a rash elsewhere on the body, that is separate from the cold sore</li> <li>• difficulty in breathing or swallowing, wheezing or cough, light-headedness, changes in alertness, skin reddening, facial/throat swelling, blue discoloration of the lips, tongue or skin (signs of severe allergic reaction).</li> </ul> <p><b>Head and neurology related:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• extreme sleepiness or confusion, usually in older people</li> <li>• hallucinations (seeing or hearing things that are not really there)</li> <li>• seizures or fits</li> <li>• light-headedness, changes in alertness</li> </ul>	<p><b>Call your doctor straightaway, or go straight to the Emergency Department at your nearest hospital if you notice any of these serious side effects.</b></p>

<p><b>Heart related:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>palpitations (signs of abnormal heart beat)</li> </ul> <p><b>Muscle and joint related:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>painful or swollen joints</li> <li>aching muscles or muscle tenderness or weakness that is not caused by exercise</li> </ul> <p><b>Breathing related:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>difficulty breathing or swallowing, wheezing or cough.</li> </ul> <p><b>Skin related:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>yellowing of the skin or eyes (signs of jaundice)</li> <li>swelling below the surface of the skin (e.g. swelling around the face, eye, eyelid or throat)</li> <li>unexplained bruising, reddish or purplish patches on the skin or bleeding more easily than usual, as it may indicate that the number of platelets (a type of blood cell responsible for blood clotting) in your blood are reduced</li> <li>severe blistering of the skin or mucous membranes of the lips, eyes, mouth, nasal passages or genitals (signs of a serious skin reaction)</li> <li>purple patches, itching, burning of the skin (signs of inflamed blood vessels)</li> <li>skin reddening, facial/throat swelling, blue discoloration of the lips, tongue or skin (signs of severe allergic reaction).</li> </ul>	
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## What this medicine contains

<b>Active ingredient</b>	Famciclovir 500 mg
<b>Other ingredients (inactive ingredients)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>microcrystalline cellulose</li> <li>crospovidone</li> <li>silicone dioxide</li> <li>copovidone</li> <li>sodium stearyl fumarate</li> <li>OPADRY II complete film coating system YS-22-18096 White</li> </ul>

**Do not take this medicine if you are allergic to any of these ingredients.**

## What this medicine looks like

PHARMACY HEALTH FAVIR for COLD SORES- 500 mg tablets are white, oval, film-coated tablets with "FM" on one side and "500" on the other side. Each carton contains 3 tablets

(Aust R 378350).

## Who distributes this medication

Pharmacy Health  
250 Camberwell Road,  
Camberwell, Victoria 3124, Australia  
This leaflet was prepared in November 2021.

**Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you notice anything that is making you feel unwell.** Other side effects not listed above may also occur in some people.

## Reporting side effects

After you have received medical advice for any side effects you experience, you can report side effects to the Therapeutic Goods Administration online at [www.tga.gov.au/reporting-problems](http://www.tga.gov.au/reporting-problems). By reporting side effects, you can help provide more information on the safety of this medicine.

## 7. Product details

This medicine is available over the counter without a doctor's prescription.

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