

Ethambutol (EMB)



A patient's guide to taking medicine for TB

What is Ethambutol?

Ethambutol (EMB) is an antibiotic medicine used to cure TB disease (when taken with other medicines)

The TB germs are very strong and are hard to get rid of. You will need to take this medicine for two or more months in order to kill the TB bacteria. Your doctor will decide exactly how many months you will need to take the medicine.

How do I take this medicine?

- It is very important that you take the medicine every day **or** as instructed by your doctor
- **Tell your doctor right away if you stop taking your medicine**
- If you miss a dose take it as soon as possible, but never take two doses at one time
- You may take the medicine with or without food
- Store EMB in a cool, dry place
- Remember to tell your doctor about other medicines you are taking or any new medicines that you start taking

* This medicine may be taken one or two times a day depending on what your doctor has prescribed.

* If you are pregnant or breast-feeding, talk to your doctor before taking this medicine.

What are some side effects I should watch out for?

- You will need to be monitored regularly by your doctor while taking Ethambutol
- **Some common side effects are:**
 - Loss of appetite
 - Upset stomach
 - Skin rash
- **If you have any of the following more serious side effects, stop taking the medicine and call your doctor**
 - EMB may cause changes in how well you see with one or both eyes. If you have blurred vision or changes in how you see colours, call your doctor as soon as possible.
 - If you take this medicine for longer than two months, you will need to have your eyes checked

Tips for taking TB medicine

- Take your medicine at the same time every day, for example:
 - Before going to bed
 - First thing in the morning
- Use a weekly pill container
- Mark off each day you take your pills on a calendar
- Ask a family member or friend to remind you
- Consider Directly Observed Therapy (DOT)

If you have any questions about your medicines or TB, please contact your doctor or Toronto Public Health at **416-338-7600**

E-mail: targettb@toronto.ca

Web site: www.toronto.ca/health/tb_prevention

