Table 17g. Antiretroviral Therapy–Associated Adverse Effects and Management Recommendations—Lactic Acidosis

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Adverse Effects	Associated ARVs	Onset/Clinical Manifestations	Estimated Frequency	Risk Factors	Prevention/ Monitoring	Management
Lactic Acidosis	**NRTIs** • ZDV • Less likely with 3TC, FTC, ABC, TAF, and TDF **Other Drugs** • See the Risk Factors and Prevention/ Monitoring columns for information regarding the toxicity of propylene glycol when LPV/r oral solution is used in neonates.	**Onset** • Generally, after years of exposure • A few cases have been reported shortly after initiation in people with underlying liver disease. **Presentation** • Lactic acidosis may be clinically asymptomatic. *Lactic Acidosis May Also Present With Insidious Onset of a Combination of Signs and Symptoms* • Generalized fatigue, weakness, and myalgias	3TC, FTC, ABC, TAF, and TDF are less likely to induce clinically significant mitochondrial dysfunction than ZDV.	**Adults** • Female sex • High BMI • Chronic HCV infection • African American race • Coadministration of TDF with metformin • Overdose of propylene glycol • CD4 count <350 cells/mm^3 • Acquired riboflavin or thiamine deficiency • Possible pregnancy • Overdose in setting of renal insufficiency, including a case of ARV-associated new-onset renal insufficiency (TDF/FTC plus DRV/c)	**Prevention** • Due to the presence of propylene glycol as a diluent, LPV/r oral solution **should not be used** in preterm neonates or any neonate who has not attained a postmenstrual age of 42 weeks and a postnatal age of ≥14 days. • Monitor for clinical manifestations of lactic acidosis and promptly adjust therapy. **Monitoring** *Asymptomatic Patients* • Routine measurement of serum lactate **is not recommended.**	**For Patients With Lactate 2.1–5.0 mmol/L (Confirmed With a Second Test)** • Consider discontinuing all ARV drugs temporarily while conducting additional diagnostic work-up. **For Patients With Lactate >5.0 mmol/L (Confirmed With a Second Test)[b] or >10.0 mmol/L (Any One Test)** • Discontinue all ARV drugs. • Provide supportive therapy (e.g., IV fluids; some patients may require sedation and respiratory support to reduce oxygen demand and ensure adequate oxygenation of tissues).

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		• Vague abdominal pain, weight loss, unexplained nausea, or vomiting • Dyspnea • Peripheral neuropathy **Note:** Patients may present with acute multiorgan failure (e.g., fulminant hepatic failure, pancreatic failure, respiratory failure).		**Preterm Infants or Any Neonates Who Have Not Attained a Postmenstrual Age of 42 Weeks and a Postnatal Age of ≥14 Days** • Exposure to propylene glycol, which is used as a diluent in LPV/r oral solution, because these newborns have a diminished ability to metabolize propylene glycol, which may lead to accumulation, increasing the risk of adverse events.	*Patients With Clinical Signs or Symptoms Consistent With Lactic Acidosis* • Obtain blood lactate level.[a] • Additional diagnostic evaluations should include serum bicarbonate, anion gap, and/or arterial blood gas; amylase and lipase; serum albumin; and hepatic transaminases.	**Anecdotal (Unproven) Supportive Therapies** • Administer bicarbonate infusions, THAM, high doses of thiamine and riboflavin, and oral antioxidants (e.g., L-carnitine, co-enzyme Q10, vitamin C). Following the resolution of clinical and laboratory abnormalities, resume therapy either with an NRTI-sparing regimen or a revised NRTI-containing regimen. Institute a revised NRTI-containing regimen with caution, using NRTIs that are less likely to induce mitochondrial dysfunction (i.e., ABC, TAF, TDF, FTC, or 3TC). Lactate should be monitored monthly for ≥3 months.

[a] Blood for lactate determination should be collected, without prolonged tourniquet application or fist clenching, into a pre-chilled, gray-top, fluoride-oxalate–containing tube and transported on ice to the laboratory to be processed within 4 hours of collection.

[b] Management can be initiated before receiving the results of the confirmatory test.

Key: 3TC = lamivudine; ABC = abacavir; ARV = antiretroviral; BMI = body mass index; CD4 = CD4 T lymphocyte; DRV/c = darunavir/cobicistat; FTC = emtricitabine; HCV = hepatitis C virus; IV = intravenous; LPV/r = lopinavir/ritonavir; NRTI = nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor; TAF = tenofovir alafenamide; TDF = tenofovir disoproxil fumarate; THAM = tris (hydroxymethyl) aminomethane; ZDV = zidovudine

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