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## Lorazepam

(lor a' ze pam)


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### Why is this medication prescribed?

Lorazepam is used to relieve anxiety. Lorazepam is in a class of medications called benzodiazepines. It works by slowing activity in the brain to allow for relaxation.

### How should this medicine be used?

Lorazepam comes as a tablet and concentrate (liquid) to take by mouth. It usually is taken two or three times a day and may be taken with or without food. Follow the directions on your prescription label carefully, and ask your doctor or pharmacist to explain any part you do not understand. Take lorazepam exactly as directed.

Lorazepam concentrate (liquid) comes with a specially marked dropper for measuring the dose. Ask your pharmacist to show you how to use the dropper. Dilute the concentrate in 1 ounce (30 milliliters) or more of water, juice, or carbonated beverages just before taking it. It also may be mixed with applesauce or pudding just before taking the dose.

Lorazepam can be habit-forming. Do not take a larger dose, take it more often, or for a longer time than your doctor tells you to. Tolerance may develop with long-term or excessive use, making the drug less effective. Do not take lorazepam for more than 4 months or stop taking this medication without talking to your doctor. Stopping the drug suddenly can worsen your condition and cause withdrawal symptoms (anxiousness, sleeplessness, and irritability). Your doctor probably will decrease your dose gradually.

### Other uses for this medicine [Return to top](#)

Lorazepam is also used to treat irritable bowel syndrome, epilepsy, insomnia, and nausea and vomiting from cancer treatment and to control agitation caused by alcohol withdrawal. Talk to your doctor about the possible risks of using this medication for your condition.

This medication may be prescribed for other uses. Ask your doctor or pharmacist for more information.

### What special precautions should I follow? [Return to top](#)

Before taking lorazepam,

- tell your doctor and pharmacist if you are allergic to lorazepam, alprazolam (Xanax), chlordiazepoxide (Librium, Librax), clonazepam (Klonopin), clorazepate (Tranxene), diazepam (Valium), estazolam (ProSom), flurazepam (Dalmane), oxazepam (Serax), prazepam (Centrax), temazepam (Restoril), triazolam (Halcion), any other medications, or any of the ingredients in lorazepam tablets or concentrate. Ask your doctor or pharmacist for a list of the ingredients.
- tell your doctor and pharmacist what prescription and nonprescription medications, vitamins, nutritional supplements, and herbal products you are

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taking or plan to take. Be sure to mention any of the following: antihistamines; digoxin (Lanoxin); levodopa (Larodopa, Sinemet); medications for depression, seizures, pain, Parkinson's disease, asthma, colds, or allergies; muscle relaxants; oral contraceptives; probenecid (Benemid); rifampin (Rifadin); sedatives; sleeping pills; theophylline (Theo-Dur); tranquilizers; and valproic acid (Depakene). Your doctor may need to change the doses of your medications or monitor you carefully for side effects.

- tell your doctor if you have or have ever had glaucoma; seizures; or lung, heart, or liver disease.
- tell your doctor if you are pregnant, plan to become pregnant, or are breast-feeding. If you become pregnant while taking lorazepam, call your doctor immediately.

talk to your doctor about the risks and benefits of taking this medication if you are 65 years of age or older. Older adults should take lower doses of lorazepam because higher doses may not be more effective and are more likely to cause serious side effects.

- if you are having surgery, including dental surgery, tell the doctor or dentist that you are taking lorazepam.
- you should know that this medication may make you drowsy. Do not drive a car or operate machinery until you know how this medication affects you.
- talk to your doctor about the safe use of alcohol during your treatment with lorazepam. Alcohol can make the side effects of this medication worse.
- tell your doctor if you use tobacco products. Cigarette smoking may decrease the effectiveness of this medication.

### What special dietary instructions should I follow? [Return to top](#)

Unless your doctor tells you otherwise, continue your normal diet.

### What should I do if I forget a dose? [Return to top](#)

If you take several doses per day and miss a dose, skip the missed dose and continue your regular dosing schedule. Do not take a double dose to make up for a missed one.

### What side effects can this medication cause? [Return to top](#)

Lorazepam may cause side effects. Call your doctor if any of the following symptoms are severe or do not go away:

- drowsiness
- dizziness
- tiredness
- weakness
- dry mouth
- diarrhea
- nausea
- changes in appetite
- restlessness or excitement
- constipation
- difficulty urinating
- frequent urination
- blurred vision
- changes in sex drive or ability

Some side effects can be serious. If you experience any of the following symptoms, call your doctor immediately:

- shuffling walk
- persistent, fine tremor or inability to sit still
- fever
- difficulty breathing or swallowing
- severe skin rash

- yellowing of the skin or eyes
- irregular heartbeat

Lorazepam may cause other side effects. Call your doctor if you have any unusual problems while you are taking this medication.

If you experience a serious side effect, you or your doctor may send a report to the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) MedWatch Adverse Event Reporting program online [at <http://www.fda.gov/Safety/MedWatch>] or by phone [1-800-332-1088].

### What should I know about storage and disposal of this medication? [Return to top](#)

Keep this medication in the container it came in, tightly closed, and out of reach of children. Store it at room temperature and away from excess heat and moisture (not in the bathroom). Throw away any medication that is outdated or no longer needed. Talk to your pharmacist about the proper disposal of your medication.

### In case of emergency/overdose [Return to top](#)

In case of overdose, call your local poison control center at 1-800-222-1222. If the victim has collapsed or is not breathing, call local emergency services at 911.

### What other information should I know? [Return to top](#)

Keep all appointments with your doctor and the laboratory. Your doctor will order certain lab tests to check your response to lorazepam.

Do not let anyone else take your medication. Ask your pharmacist any questions you have about refilling your prescription.

It is important for you to keep a written list of all of the prescription and nonprescription (over-the-counter) medicines you are taking, as well as any products such as vitamins, minerals, or other dietary supplements. You should bring this list with you each time you visit a doctor or if you are admitted to a hospital. It is also important information to carry with you in case of emergencies.

### Brand names [Return to top](#)

- Ativan®
- Lorazepam Intensol

Last Revised - 10/01/2010

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Page last updated: 28 August 2013