



# Cymbalta

**Generic Name:** duloxetine (du LOX e teen)

**Brand Names:** *Cymbalta, Irenka*

Medically reviewed by Kaci Durbin, MD Last updated on Jan 2, 2019.

## What is Cymbalta?

Cymbalta (duloxetine) is a **selective serotonin and norepinephrine reuptake inhibitor antidepressant (SSNRI)**. Duloxetine affects chemicals in the brain that may be unbalanced in people with depression.

Cymbalta is used to treat **major depressive disorder** in adults. It is also used to treat **general anxiety disorder** in adults and children who are at least 7 years old.

Cymbalta is also used in adults to treat **fibromyalgia** (a chronic pain disorder), or chronic muscle or joint pain (such as low back pain and osteoarthritis pain).

Cymbalta is also used to treat pain caused by nerve damage in adults with diabetes (**diabetic neuropathy**).

## Important information

Do not take Cymbalta within 5 days before or 14 days after you have used a MAO inhibitor, such as isocarboxazid, linezolid, phenelzine, rasagiline, selegiline, or tranylcypromine, or methylene blue injection.

Cymbalta should not be used if you have narrow angle glaucoma.

Some young people have thoughts about suicide when first taking an **antidepressant**. Stay alert to changes in your mood or symptoms. Report any new or worsening symptoms to your doctor, such as: mood or behavior changes, anxiety, panic attacks, trouble sleeping, or if you feel impulsive, irritable, agitated, hostile, aggressive, restless, hyperactive (mentally or physically), more depressed, or have thoughts about suicide or hurting yourself.

**Do not stop using Cymbalta without first talking to your doctor.**

## Before taking this medicine

You should not use Cymbalta if you are allergic to duloxetine.

Do not take Cymbalta within 5 days before or 14 days after you have used an MAO inhibitor, such as isocarboxazid, linezolid, phenelzine, rasagiline, selegiline, tranylcypromine, or methylene blue injection. A dangerous drug interaction could occur.

Some medicines can interact with duloxetine and cause a serious condition called **serotonin syndrome**. Be sure your doctor knows if you also take stimulant medicine, opioid medicine, herbal products, or medicine for depression, mental illness, Parkinson's disease, migraine headaches, serious infections, or prevention of nausea and vomiting. **Ask your doctor before making any changes in how or when you take your medications.**

To make sure Cymbalta is safe for you, tell your doctor if you have ever had:

- liver or kidney disease;
- seizures or epilepsy;
- a bleeding or blood clotting disorder;
- high blood pressure;
- **narrow-angle glaucoma**;
- diabetes;
- difficulty urinating;
- bipolar disorder (manic depression);
- drug addiction or suicidal thoughts.

Some young people have thoughts about suicide when first taking an antidepressant. Your doctor will need to check your progress at regular visits while you are using Cymbalta. Your family or other caregivers should also be alert to changes in your mood or symptoms.

It is not known whether duloxetine will harm an unborn baby. However, Cymbalta may cause problems in a newborn if you take the medicine during the third trimester of pregnancy. Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant while using this medicine.

If you are pregnant, your name may be listed on a pregnancy registry. This is to track the outcome of the pregnancy and to evaluate any effects of Cymbalta on the baby.

Duloxetine can pass into breast milk, but effects on the nursing baby are not known. Tell your doctor if you are breast-feeding.

## **How should I take Cymbalta?**

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Take Cymbalta exactly as prescribed by your doctor. Follow all directions on your prescription label. Do not take this medicine in larger or smaller amounts or for longer than recommended.

You may take Cymbalta with or without food.

Do not crush, chew, break, or open an extended-release capsule. Swallow it whole.

It may take 1 to 4 weeks before your symptoms improve. Keep using the medication as directed. **Do not stop using Cymbalta without first talking to your doctor.** You may have unpleasant side effects if you stop taking this medicine suddenly.

Store Cymbalta at room temperature away from moisture and heat.

**See also:**

**Cymbalta dosage information** (in more detail)

## **What happens if I miss a dose?**

Take the missed dose as soon as you remember. Skip the missed dose if it is almost time for your next scheduled dose. Do not take extra medicine to make up the missed dose.

## **What happens if I overdose?**

Seek emergency medical attention or call the Poison Help line at 1-800-222-1222.

## **What should I avoid while taking Cymbalta?**

Avoid drinking alcohol. It may increase your risk of liver damage.

Ask your doctor before taking a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) for pain, arthritis, fever, or swelling. This includes aspirin, ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin), naproxen (Aleve), celecoxib (Celebrex), diclofenac, indomethacin, meloxicam, and others. Using an NSAID with Cymbalta may cause you to bruise or bleed easily.

Cymbalta may impair your thinking or reactions. Be careful if you drive or do anything that requires you to be alert. Avoid getting up too fast from a sitting or lying position, or you may feel dizzy. Get up slowly and steady yourself to prevent a fall.

Severe dizziness or fainting can cause falls, accidents, or severe injuries.

## **Cymbalta side effects**

Get emergency medical help if you have **signs of an allergic reaction to Cymbalta**: skin rash or hives; difficulty breathing; swelling of your face, lips, tongue, or throat.

Report any new or worsening symptoms to your doctor, such as: mood or behavior changes, anxiety, panic attacks, trouble sleeping, or if you feel impulsive, irritable, agitated,

hostile, aggressive, restless, hyperactive (mentally or physically), more depressed, or have thoughts about suicide or hurting yourself.

Call your doctor at once if you have:

- a light-headed feeling, like you might pass out;
- vision changes, eye pain or swelling, eye redness;
- easy bruising, unusual bleeding;
- painful or difficult urination;
- a seizure;
- **a manic episode** - racing thoughts, increased energy, reckless behavior, feeling extremely happy or irritable, talking more than usual, severe problems with sleep;
- right-sided upper stomach pain, itching, dark urine, yellowing of the skin or eyes (signs of liver problems);
- headache, confusion, slurred speech, severe weakness, vomiting, loss of coordination, feeling unsteady (signs of low levels of sodium in the body); or
- **severe skin reaction** - fever, sore throat, swelling in your face or tongue, burning in your eyes, skin pain, followed by a red or purple skin rash that spreads (especially in the face or upper body) and causes blistering and peeling.

**Seek medical attention right away if you have symptoms of serotonin syndrome, such as:** agitation, hallucinations, fever, sweating, shivering, fast heart rate, muscle stiffness, twitching, loss of coordination, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.

Older adults may be more sensitive to the side effects of this medicine.

Common Cymbalta side effects may include:

- dry mouth;
- drowsiness, dizziness;
- tired feeling;
- nausea, constipation, loss of appetite, weight loss; or
- increased sweating.

This is not a complete list of side effects and others may occur. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

**See also:**

**Cymbalta side effects** (in more detail)

## What other drugs will affect Cymbalta?

Many drugs can interact with duloxetine. Not all possible interactions are listed here. Tell your doctor about all your current medicines and any you start or stop using, especially:

- any other antidepressant;
- cimetidine;
- St. John's wort;
- theophylline;
- tryptophan (sometimes called L-tryptophan);
- **an amphetamine** - Adderall, Focalin, Vyvanse, Ritalin, Concerta, Strattera, and others;
- **an antibiotic** - ciprofloxacin, enoxacin;
- **a blood thinner** - warfarin, Coumadin, Jantoven;
- **heart rhythm medication** - flecainide, propafenone, quinidine, and others;
- **opioid medicine** - fentanyl, tramadol;
- **medicine to treat mood disorders, thought disorders, or mental illness** - buspirone, lithium, thioridazine, and many others; or
- **migraine headache medicine** - sumatriptan, rizatriptan, zolmitriptan, and others.

This list is not complete and many other drugs can interact with duloxetine. This includes prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal products. Give a list of all your medicines to any healthcare provider who treats you.

See also:

**Cymbalta drug interactions** (in more detail)

## Further information

Remember, keep this and all other medicines out of the reach of children, never share your medicines with others, and use Cymbalta only for the indication prescribed.

Always consult your healthcare provider to ensure the information displayed on this page applies to your personal circumstances.

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