

Lexapro

Generic Name: Escitalopram

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What is this medication and its most common uses?

Lexapro is a medicine called a selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor (SSRI). It is used to treat major depressive disorder and generalized anxiety disorder. Lexapro is available in tablets and an oral solution.

What should I know when beginning and continuing on this medication?

How does this medication work?

Lexapro is thought to work by increasing the activity of a chemical in your brain called serotonin. By increasing serotonin, Lexapro may help improve your symptoms of depression and anxiety.

What are the beneficial effects of this medication and when should I begin to have results?

What: Lexapro has been shown to relieve symptoms associated with depression and anxiety, as measured by appropriate symptom rating scales that are commonly used by healthcare providers to evaluate the effectiveness of the medicine in people with these conditions.

When: Everyone responds differently to treatment, so try to be patient and follow your healthcare provider's directions. It is important that you take Lexapro exactly as your healthcare provider has prescribed, even if you do not feel better right away.

How do I know it is working?

Your healthcare provider may ask you a series of questions from time to time that will help assess how well your symptoms are controlled with treatment.

What are the possible side effects of this medication?

The following is not a full list of side effects. Side effects cannot be anticipated. If any develop or change in intensity, tell your healthcare provider as soon as possible. Only your healthcare provider can determine if it is safe for you to continue taking this medication.

Lexapro can increase the risk of suicidal thoughts and behavior in children, teenagers, and

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young adults. Your healthcare provider will monitor you closely for clinical worsening and suicidal or unusual behavior after you start taking Lexapro or start a new dose of Lexapro. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you experience anxiety, hostility, sleeplessness, restlessness, impulsive or dangerous behavior, or thoughts about suicide or dying; or if you have new symptoms or seem to be feeling worse.

More common side effects may include: trouble sleeping, sexual problems, nausea, increased sweating, tiredness, drowsiness.

Less common side effects may include:

Serotonin syndrome (a potentially life-threatening drug reaction that causes the body to have too much serotonin, a chemical produced by the nerve cells) with symptoms such as mental status changes (such as agitation or hallucinations), an increase in your heart rate and temperature, lack of coordination, overactive reflexes, muscle rigidity, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.

Abnormal bleeding or bruising, especially if you also take blood thinners (such as warfarin), nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) (such as ibuprofen or naproxen), or aspirin.

Manic episodes with symptoms such as greatly increased energy, severe trouble sleeping, racing thoughts, reckless behavior, excessive happiness or irritability, or talking more or faster than usual.

Low blood sodium (salt) levels with symptoms such as headache, weakness, an unsteady feeling, confusion, problems concentrating or thinking, or memory problems.

Changes in your child's appetite or weight.

Lexapro may also cause seizures.

Who should not take this medication?

Do not take Lexapro if you are allergic to it, any of its ingredients, or a medicine called citalopram.

Do not take Lexapro if you take another medicine called a monoamine oxidase inhibitor (MAOI) (such as phenelzine, selegiline, or linezolid), a class of medications used to treat depression and other conditions. Do not start taking Lexapro if you stopped taking an MAOI in the last 2 weeks, unless directed to do so by your healthcare provider.

Do not take Lexapro if you take pimozide.

What should I tell my healthcare provider before I take the first dose of this medication?

Tell your healthcare provider about all prescription, over-the-counter, and herbal medications you are taking before beginning treatment with Lexapro. Also, talk to your healthcare provider about your complete medical history, especially if you have heart, kidney, or liver problems; high blood pressure; bipolar disorder or mania; low sodium levels in your blood; a history of stroke, bleeding problems, or seizures; or if you are pregnant, plan to become pregnant, or are breastfeeding.

What is the usual dosage?

The information below is based on the dosage guidelines your healthcare provider uses. Depending on your condition and medical history, your healthcare provider may prescribe a different regimen. Do not change the dosage or stop taking your medication without your healthcare provider's approval.

Major Depressive Disorder

Adults and adolescents 12-17 years: The recommended starting dose is 10 milligrams (mg) once a day.

Generalized Anxiety Disorder



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Adults: The recommended starting dose is 10 mg once a day.

Your healthcare provider may increase your or your child's dose as needed until the desired effect is achieved.

If you are elderly or have liver impairment, your healthcare provider may adjust your dose appropriately.

It is important that you do not stop taking this medication abruptly. If you need to change or stop taking this medication, it is important that you only do this with the guidance of your healthcare provider.

How should I take this medication?

Take Lexapro exactly as prescribed by your healthcare provider. Do not change your dose or stop taking Lexapro without first talking to your healthcare provider.

Take Lexapro once a day, either in the morning or in the evening. Take it with or without food.

What should I avoid while taking this medication?

Do not drive, operate heavy machinery, or engage in other dangerous activities until you know how Lexapro affects you.

Do not drink alcohol while you are taking Lexapro.

What are the possible food and drug interactions associated with this medication?

If Lexapro is taken with certain other drugs, the effects of either could be increased, decreased, or altered. Lexapro may interact with numerous medications. Therefore, it is very important that you tell your healthcare provider about any other medications you are taking.

May I receive this medication if I am pregnant or breastfeeding?

Lexapro may harm your newborn baby if you take it during the last few months of your pregnancy.

Lexapro can be found in your breast milk if you take it while breastfeeding. Tell your healthcare provider immediately if you are pregnant, plan to become pregnant, or are breastfeeding.

What should I do if I miss a dose of this medication?

If you miss a dose of Lexapro, take it as soon as you remember. However, if it is almost time for your next dose, skip the one you missed and return to your regular dosing schedule. Do not take two doses at once.

How should I store this medication?

Store at room temperature.

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