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Important Safety Information

Important Safety Information About PRISTIQ® (desvenlafaxine)

Suicidality and Antidepressant Drugs
Antidepressants increased the risk of suicidal thinking and behavior in children, teens, and young adults. Depression and certain other psychiatric disorders are themselves

Prescribing Information

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Home → Drugs A to Z → Effexor

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Effexor

Generic Name: [venlafaxine](#) (VEN la fax een)
Brand Names: *Effexor*, *Effexor XR*

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What is Effexor?

Effexor (venlafaxine) is an antidepressant in a group of drugs called selective serotonin and norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors (SSNRIs). Venlafaxine affects chemicals in the brain that may become unbalanced and cause depression.

Effexor is used to treat major depressive disorder, anxiety, and panic disorder.

Effexor may also be used for purposes not listed in this medication guide.

Important information

You should not take Effexor if you are being treated with methylene blue injection.

Do not use Effexor if you have taken an MAO inhibitor in the past 14 days. A dangerous drug interaction could occur. MAO inhibitors include isocarboxazid, linezolid, phenelzine, rasagiline, selegiline, and tranylcypromine. After you stop taking this medicine, you must wait at least 7 days before you start taking an MAOI.

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 Effexor. Your family or other caregivers should also be alert to changes in your mood or symptoms.

Do not give this medication to anyone under 18 years old without the advice of a doctor.

Video: Defining Clinical Depression

Related Information



Availability
Prescription only



Pregnancy Category
Risk cannot be ruled out



CSA Schedule
Not a controlled drug



Approval History
Drug history at FDA

Reviews

213 User Reviews

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Manufacturer

Wyeth

Drug Class

Serotonin-norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors (SNRIs)

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Before taking this medicine

You should not take Effexor if you are allergic to venlafaxine or desvenlafaxine (Pristiq), or if you are being treated with methylene blue injection.

Do not use Effexor if you have taken an MAO inhibitor in the past 14 days. A dangerous drug interaction could occur. MAO inhibitors include isocarboxazid, linezolid, phenelzine, rasagiline, selegiline, and tranylcypromine. After you stop taking Effexor, you must wait at least 7 days before you start taking an MAOI.

To make sure this medicine is safe for you, tell your doctor if you have:

- bipolar disorder (manic depression);
- cirrhosis or other liver disease;
- kidney disease;
- heart disease, high blood pressure, high cholesterol;
- diabetes;
- glaucoma;
- a thyroid disorder;
- a history of seizures;
- a bleeding or blood clotting disorder;
- low levels of sodium in your blood; or
- if you are switching to Effexor from another antidepressant.

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 Effexor. Your family or other caregivers should also be alert to changes in your mood or symptoms.

FDA pregnancy category C. Taking an SSRI antidepressant during pregnancy may cause serious lung problems or other complications in the baby. However, you may have a relapse of depression if you stop taking your antidepressant. Tell your doctor right away if you become pregnant while taking Effexor. Do not start or stop taking this medicine during pregnancy without your doctor's advice.

See also: [Pregnancy and breastfeeding warnings](#) (in more detail)

Venlafaxine can pass into breast milk and may harm a nursing baby. You should not breast-feed while using this medicine.

Do not give this medication to anyone under 18 years old without the advice of a doctor.

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How should I take Effexor?

Take Effexor 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.

Effexor should be taken with food. Try to take Effexor at the same time each day.

Swallow the controlled-release capsule (Effexor XR) whole, without crushing or chewing. To make the medication easier to swallow, you may open the capsule and sprinkle the medicine into a small amount of applesauce. Swallow all of the mixture without chewing, and do not save any for

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later use.

Your blood pressure will need to be checked often.

It may take 4 weeks before your symptoms improve. Keep using the medication as directed and tell your doctor if your symptoms do not improve.

This medicine can cause you to have a false positive drug screening test. If you provide a urine sample for drug screening, tell the laboratory staff that you are taking Effexor.

You should not stop using Effexor suddenly. Follow your doctor's instructions about tapering your dose.

Store at room temperature away from moisture and heat.

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?

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 Effexor may cause you to bruise or bleed easily.

Effexor may impair your thinking or reactions. Be careful if you drive or do anything that requires you to be alert.

Avoid drinking alcohol, which can increase some of the side effects of this medicine.

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Effexor side effects

Get emergency medical help if you have any of these signs of an allergic reaction to Effexor: 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:

- seizure (convulsions);
- very stiff (rigid) muscles, high fever, sweating, confusion, fast or uneven heartbeats, tremors, feeling like you might pass out;

- agitation, hallucinations, fever, fast heart rate, overactive reflexes, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, loss of coordination;
- headache, slurred speech, severe weakness, muscle cramps, feeling unsteady, fainting, shallow breathing (breathing may stop);
- cough, chest tightness, trouble breathing; or
- easy bruising.

Common Effexor side effects may include:

- drowsiness, dizziness, weakness, feeling nervous;
- increased sweating;
- blurred vision;
- dry mouth;
- changes in appetite or weight;
- mild nausea, constipation; or
- decreased sex drive, impotence, or difficulty having an orgasm.

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: [Side effects](#) (in more detail)

What other drugs will affect Effexor?

Taking Effexor with other drugs that make you sleepy or slow your breathing can increase these effects. Ask your doctor before taking Effexor with a sleeping pill, narcotic pain medicine, muscle relaxer, or medicine for anxiety or seizures.

Many drugs can interact with venlafaxine. Not all possible interactions are listed here. Tell your doctor about all your medications and any you start or stop using during treatment with Effexor, especially:

- a blood thinner (warfarin, Coumadin);
- cimetidine;
- lithium;
- St. John's wort;
- tramadol;
- tryptophan (sometimes called L-tryptophan);
- medicines to treat psychiatric disorders--chlorpromazine, fluphenazine, haloperidol, iloperidone, paliperidone, perphenazine, pimozide, prochlorperazine, quetiapine, risperidone, thioridazine, trifluoperazine, ziprasidone;
- migraine headache medicine--sumatriptan, zolmitriptan, and others; or
- other antidepressants--amoxapine, amitriptyline, clomipramine, desipramine, doxepin, fluoxetine, imipramine, maprotiline, nortriptyline, protriptyline, trimipramine.

This list is not complete. Other drugs may interact with venlafaxine, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal products. Not all possible interactions are listed in this medication guide.

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Other formulations

- [Effexor XR](#)

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Where can I get more information?

- Your pharmacist can provide more information about Effexor.

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

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