

Patient Education - English

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Generic Name: amitriptyline

Pronounced: a mee TRIP ti leen

What is the most important information I should know about amitriptyline?



You should not use this medicine if you have recently had a heart attack.

Do not use amitriptyline if you have used an MAO inhibitor in the past 14 days, such as isocarboxazid, linezolid, methylene blue injection, phenelzine, rasagiline, selegiline, or tranylcypromine.

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.*

What is amitriptyline?

Amitriptyline is a tricyclic antidepressant that is used to treat symptoms of depression.

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

What should I discuss with my healthcare provider before taking amitriptyline?



You should not use amitriptyline if you are allergic to it, or:

if you have recently had a heart attack.

Do not use amitriptyline if you have used an MAO inhibitor in the past 14 days. A dangerous drug interaction could occur. MAO inhibitors include isocarboxazid, linezolid, methylene blue injection, phenelzine, rasagiline, selegiline, tranylcypromine, and others.

Tell your doctor if you have used an "SSRI" antidepressant in the past 5 weeks, such as citalopram, escitalopram, fluoxetine (Prozac), fluvoxamine, paroxetine, sertraline (Zoloft), trazodone, or vilazodone.

Tell your doctor if you have ever had:

bipolar disorder (manic-depression) or schizophrenia;

mental illness or psychosis;

liver disease;

heart disease;

a heart attack, stroke, or seizures;

diabetes (amitriptyline may raise or lower blood sugar);

glaucoma; or

problems with urination.

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

Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or breastfeeding.



Amitriptyline is not approved for use by anyone younger than 12 years old.

How should I take amitriptyline?

Follow all directions on your prescription label and read all medication guides or instruction sheets. Your doctor may occasionally change your dose. Use the medicine exactly as directed.



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

If you need surgery, tell your surgeon you currently use this medicine. You may need to stop for a short time.

Do not stop using amitriptyline suddenly, or you could have unpleasant withdrawal symptoms. Ask your doctor how to safely stop using amitriptyline.



Store at room temperature away from moisture and heat. Keep the bottle tightly closed when not in use.

What happens if I miss a dose?

Take the medicine as soon as you can, but skip the missed dose if it is almost time for your next dose. *Do not* take two doses at one time.

What happens if I overdose?



Seek emergency medical attention or call the Poison Help line at 1-800-222-1222. *An overdose of amitriptyline can be fatal.*

Overdose symptoms may include irregular heart rhythm, feeling like you might pass out, seizures, or coma.

What should I avoid while taking amitriptyline?



Do not drink alcohol. Dangerous side effects or death can occur when alcohol is combined with amitriptyline.



Avoid driving or hazardous activity until you know how this medicine will affect you. Your reactions could be impaired.



Avoid exposure to sunlight or tanning beds. Amitriptyline can make you sunburn more easily. Wear protective clothing and use sunscreen (SPF 30 or higher) when you are outdoors.

What are the possible side effects of amitriptyline?



Get emergency medical help if you have *signs of an allergic reaction*: 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:

signs of a blood clot--sudden numbness or weakness, problems with vision or speech, swelling or redness in an arm or leg;

unusual thoughts or behavior;

a light-headed feeling, like you might pass out;

chest pain or pressure, pain spreading to your jaw or shoulder, nausea, sweating;

pounding heartbeats or fluttering in your chest;

confusion, hallucinations;

a seizure (convulsions);

painful or difficult urination;

severe constipation;

easy bruising, unusual bleeding; or

fever, chills, sore throat, mouth sores.

Common side effects may include:

constipation, diarrhea;

nausea, vomiting, upset stomach;

mouth pain, unusual taste, black tongue;

appetite or weight changes;

urinating less than usual;

itching or rash;

breast swelling (in men or women); 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.

What other drugs will affect amitriptyline?



Taking this medicine with other drugs that make you sleepy can worsen this effect. Ask your doctor before taking amitriptyline with a sleeping pill, narcotic pain medicine, muscle relaxer, or medicine for anxiety, depression, or seizures.

Sometimes it is not safe to use certain medications at the same time. Some drugs can affect your blood levels of other drugs you take, which may increase side effects or make the medications less effective.

Tell your doctor about all your other medicines, especially:

other antidepressants;

medicine to treat depression, anxiety, mood disorders, or mental illness;

cold or allergy medicine (Benadryl and others);

medicine to treat Parkinson's disease;

medicine to treat stomach problems, motion sickness, or irritable bowel syndrome;

medicine to treat overactive bladder; or

bronchodilator asthma medication.

This list is not complete. Other drugs may affect amitriptyline, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal products. Not all possible drug interactions are listed here.

Where can I get more information?

Your pharmacist can provide more information about amitriptyline.

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

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Pill Pictures



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