



Medication: Amitriptyline

You have been prescribed amitriptyline by your specialist in order to reduce the pain you experience.

Amitriptyline is a tricyclic antidepressant used to treat chronic neuropathic pain. For the treatment of pain, Amitriptyline is taken at doses well below those at which the drug acts as an antidepressant.

DOSE

Most patients take a period of weeks to achieve their optimal dose of Amitriptyline. It often takes the body time to adjust to this medication - not only to see the benefits of pain reduction but also to get used to some of the side effects. When starting on 5mg, it is recommended to wait until sleepiness wears off before increasing to 10mg.

Either way you should be patient as the dose increases and allow a few days for your body to adjust, unless any side effects you experience are too unpleasant (see below).

This is quite a long period to adjust your medication over. If your pain is controlled to an extent that is satisfactory to you, there is no need to continue increasing.

WEEK	MORNING	EVENING
1	-	12.5mg
2	-	25mg
3	-	50mg
4	-	100mg
maximum	-	150mg

SIDE EFFECTS

All medicines can cause a wide variety of side effects. The full list can be found on the patient information leaflet from the manufacturer.

Common side effects:

These might occur in 1% or more of people. Common side effects might include dizziness, drowsiness, dry mouth, head pain, increased hunger, taste problems, and weight gain.

Infrequent side effects:

These occur in between 0.1% and 1% of people. Infrequent side effects might include abnormal heart rhythm, abnormally low blood pressure, blurred vision, confusion, difficult or painful urination, hallucination, impotence, involuntary quivering, nervousness, Parkinson's symptoms, diarrhoea, sweating, and heartburn.

Rare side effects:

These occur in less than 0.1% of people. Infrequent side effects might include imbalance in blood cells, hepatitis, paralysis of intestines, seizures, syndrome of inappropriate antidiuretic hormone secretion (SIADH), and increased pressure in the eye.

STOPPING AMITRIPTYLINE

Once you have taken Amitriptyline for more than one month, stopping the medication should occur slowly and will be guided by your pain specialist or GP.

As with all medications:

- Keep away from children;
- Ensure you have enough for weekends and holidays;
- Read the patient information leaflet; and
- Please advise us if you are pregnant, planning pregnancy, or breastfeeding.

REMEMBER

- Your GP will continue to manage your pain medications and give you ongoing prescriptions.
- If any of the side effects are too troubling, drop down to your previous dose and contact your GP.