



## Escitalopram (Lexapro)

The medication Escitalopram (**Lexapro**) is an antidepressant. It is used to treat depression. Lexapro is prescribed for many other medical conditions including anxiety, obsessive-compulsive disorder, panic disorder, and PTSD. Generally these symptoms interfere with your life goals, which is why many people choose to take Lexapro.

Lexapro is FDA approved for Major Depression in adults and adolescents and for Generalized Anxiety Disorder in adults.

Although Lexapro can be very helpful, it can cause some side effects that you should know of before accepting treatment with it. The most common include: **dry mouth and nausea; drowsiness or sleeplessness; and increased sweating.** Although these effects generally occur during initial treatment some remain throughout treatment and may warrant discontinuing the medication. Talk with your provider about it.

Some people experience sexual side effects when using Lexapro including decreased libido and ejaculatory problems.

In children and adolescents, antidepressants have been shown to increase suicidal thoughts. Certainly untreated depression/anxiety is going to lead to suicidal thoughts more often than treatment. Nevertheless you should be aware of this rare situation. If you begin to develop intrusive suicidal thoughts, please let your physician know or go to an Emergency Room or crisis center.

The beneficial effect of Lexapro can sometimes take 7-28 days to be appreciated, and sometimes longer. Generally if no effect is felt after 4 weeks, then a different medication or a different dosage should be tried. The usual effective dose is 10-20 mg a day.

You can experience uncomfortable symptoms if your Lexapro is abruptly stopped. These can include weakness, dizziness, headache, fever, anxiety and agitation.

Lexapro is generally safe with other medications. Yet please let your provider know if you are taking other medications. There are no dietary restrictions with Lexapro.

There are supplemental ways to improve life which include:

- exercise
- good sleep habits
- good eating habits
- yoga
- a hobby
- visiting with family or friends
- psychotherapy

If you have further questions about this medication, please ask your medical provider or your pharmacist.

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