



## Mid-Valley Behavioral Care Network

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### Paroxetine (Paxil)

The medication Paroxetine (**Paxil**) is an antidepressant. It is used to treat depression. Paxil 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 Paxil.

Paxil is FDA approved for Major Depression, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, Panic Disorder, Social Anxiety Disorder, and Post-traumatic Stress Disorder.

Although Paxil 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 constipation; drowsiness or sleeplessness; anxiety.** 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 Paxil 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 Paxil 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 dosage range is 20-40 mg/ day.

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

Paxil is generally safe with other medications. Some common psychotropic medications it interacts with include Depakote and Tegretal. As with all medications, please let your provider know if you are taking other medications. There are no dietary restrictions with Paxil.

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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