



## Mid-Valley Behavioral Care Network

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### **Sertraline (Zoloft)**

The medication Sertraline (**Zoloft**) is an antidepressant. It is used to treat depression. Zoloft 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 Zoloft.

Zoloft is FDA approved for Major Depression, Social Anxiety Disorder, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, Panic Disorder, Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, and Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder.

Although Zoloft 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 and gastro-intestinal distress.** 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 Zoloft 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 Zoloft 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 from 50mg to 150 mg. There are no dietary restrictions.

You can experience uncomfortable symptoms if your Zoloft is abruptly stopped. These can include weakness, dizziness, headache, fever, anxiety and agitation. If you choose to stop you should decrease the dosage slowly over a week. Talking with your provider may also be important.

Zoloft is generally safe with other medications. As with all medications, please let your provider know if you are taking other medications.

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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