



Amitriptyline for Fibromyalgia



Amitriptyline

Generic name: Amitriptyline

Brand names: Commonly sold under brand names such as Elavil

Amitriptyline (a-mi-TRIP-ti-leen/ Elavil ®) is a medication originally developed as an antidepressant, but it is commonly prescribed at lower doses to help manage fibromyalgia symptoms. It is often used to improve sleep quality, reduce pain, and decrease fatigue in people living with fibromyalgia.

How does it work

Amitriptyline works by affecting certain neurotransmitters in the brain, including serotonin and norepinephrine, which are involved in pain processing and sleep regulation.

What are the side effects

Common side effects may include dry mouth, drowsiness, dizziness, constipation, and weight gain. Not everyone experiences these effects, and some people find that side effects lessen over time. Before operating machinery or driving, know how this medication affects you.





When should this medication NOT be used

Amitriptyline may not be appropriate for everyone. It should generally not be used, or should be used only with close medical supervision, in people who:

- Have had an allergic reaction to amitriptyline or similar medications.
- Have had a recent heart attack.
- Have certain heart rhythm problems or significant heart disease.
- Are taking, or have taken within the last 14 days, a monoamine oxidase inhibitor (MAOI) antidepressant.
- Have severe liver disease.
- Have untreated narrow-angle glaucoma.
- Have a history of urinary retention or significant prostate enlargement that causes difficulty urinating.

Extra caution may also be needed in older adults, people with a history of seizures, bipolar disorder, dementia, or those taking other medications that can cause drowsiness.

What is the typical dose for fibromyalgia?

Because amitriptyline can cause drowsiness, it is usually taken 1–2 hours before going to sleep.

Typical starting dose:

- 5 – 10 mg taken once daily at bedtime.

Common dose range:

- 10–50 mg at bedtime.

Many people with fibromyalgia find benefit at doses between 10 and 25 mg nightly. Healthcare providers often start with a low dose and increase gradually based on symptom relief and side effects.

If stopping amitriptyline, you must consult your prescriber/pharmacist. In most cases the dose is decreased slowly to prevent withdrawal symptoms which may include restlessness, sleep and dream disturbances, diarrhea, nausea, headaches, malaise, anxiety, and irritability.

People tolerate drugs differently. Always discuss medications with your prescriber and pharmacist to ensure that this is the correct medication for you. Considerations include other drugs you may be taking (prescription and over-the-counter), natural supplements and other health conditions you may have.