
ESCITALOPRAM (Lexapro) Fact Sheet for Patients

Generic Name: Escitalopram (es-sye-TAL-oh-pram)

Brand Name: Lexapro

What Does It Treat?

Escitalopram is used to treat major depressive disorder and generalized anxiety disorder.

How Does It Work?

Escitalopram is a selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor (SSRI). It works by increasing the amount of serotonin, a natural substance in the brain that helps regulate mood and anxiety.

How Do I Take It?

Escitalopram is available as a tablet or a liquid. It is typically taken once a day, with or without food.

What is the Dose?

The typical dosage for escitalopram, used for depression and anxiety, is 10-20 mg per day. The dosing depends on the condition being treated and should be determined by your health care provider.

How Long Will I Take It?

The duration of your treatment with escitalopram can vary based on your health condition and how you respond to the medication. In general, many people take it for several months or more. Your health care provider will guide you.

What If I Miss a Dose?

If you forget a dose of escitalopram, take it as soon as you remember. But if it's nearly time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and just take the next one at the regular time. Don't take a double dose to make up for a missed one.

What Are Possible Side Effects?

- Most common: Nausea, headache, trouble sleeping (insomnia), drowsiness, sexual side effects.
- Serious but rare: Abnormal bleeding or easy bruising, low sodium levels in the blood (hyponatremia), serotonin syndrome (agitation, confusion, rapid heartbeat).

What Else Should I Know?

- Escitalopram may interact with other medications, so inform your health care provider of all the medications you are taking.
- You should not take escitalopram if you are taking a monoamine oxidase inhibitor (MAOI) or have recently stopped using an MAOI.
- Before starting escitalopram, tell your health care provider if you have a history of a manic episode or bipolar disorder, seizures, liver disease, kidney disease, or a low sodium level in your blood.

Remember, this fact sheet provides general information about this medication. For more specific guidance and instructions, consult your health care provider.