
LORAZEPAM (Ativan) Fact Sheet for Patients

Generic Name: Lorazepam (lor-A-ze-pam)

Brand Names: Ativan, Loreev XR

What Does It Treat?

Lorazepam is used to treat anxiety disorders. It can also be used to treat insomnia and seizures, and to provide sedation before medical procedures.

How Does It Work?

Lorazepam belongs to a class of medications called benzodiazepines. It works by enhancing the activity of a neurotransmitter in the brain called gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA), which helps to reduce excessive electrical activity and promote relaxation.

How Do I Take It?

Lorazepam is available as a tablet, an extended-release capsule, and a concentrate (liquid) to take by mouth. It is also available as an injectable solution. Follow your health care provider's instructions on dosing and schedule.

What is the Dose?

The dose of lorazepam varies depending on the condition being treated. The typical dosage, used for anxiety, is 1-4 mg per day in divided doses. The dosing depends on both the condition being treated and the product being used and should be determined by your health care provider.

How Long Will I Take It?

The duration of lorazepam treatment depends on your specific condition and how well you respond to the medication. It is meant to be used for short-term relief of acute symptoms. Your health care provider will determine the right duration for you.

What If I Miss a Dose?

If you forget to take a dose of lorazepam, take it as soon as you remember. However, if it is close to the time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and continue with your regular dosing schedule. Do not take extra doses to make up for the missed one.

What Are Possible Side Effects?

- Most common: Drowsiness, dizziness, loss of coordination, fatigue.
- Serious but rare: Slurred speech, memory problems, increased agitation, worsening of depression, respiratory depression (unusually slow or shallow breathing).

What Else Should I Know?

- Lorazepam may interact with other medications. Inform your healthcare provider of all medications you are taking.
- Avoid alcohol and certain medications that can cause drowsiness while taking lorazepam, as they may increase lorazepam's sedative effects.
- You should not take lorazepam if you are allergic to it, or if you have a severe respiratory disease or sleep apnea.
- Before starting lorazepam, tell your health care provider if you have a history of kidney or liver disease, glaucoma, or a history of drug or alcohol abuse.
- Do not take more lorazepam than prescribed to you and do not abruptly stop taking this medication as it may lead to withdrawal symptoms. Follow your health care provider's guidance for gradually reducing the dosage.

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