

Palmetto State Pharmaceuticals

Patient Drug Education

LEXAPRO 20 MG TABLET

USES:

Escitalopram is used to treat depression and generalized anxiety disorder (GAD). This medication works by restoring the balance of certain chemicals in the brain to improve mood and feelings of well-being. It is known as a selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor (SSRI).

HOW TO TAKE THIS MEDICATION:

HOW TO USE: Read the Medication Guide provided by your pharmacist before you start using escitalopram and each time you get a refill. If you have any questions regarding the information, consult your doctor or pharmacist. Take this medication by mouth, with or without food, usually once daily or as directed by your doctor. Dosage is based on your medical condition and response to therapy. It is important to continue taking this medication even if your symptoms begin to improve. Do not stop taking this medication without consulting your doctor. Some conditions may become worse when the drug is abruptly stopped. Your dose may need to be gradually decreased to reduce symptoms such as burning or tingling sensations, headache, or feeling anxious. It may take up to 4 to 6 weeks before the full benefit of this drug takes effect. Use this medication regularly in order to get the most benefit from it. To help you remember, take it at the same time each day. If you are using the escitalopram oral solution, use a specially marked medicine dropper or medicine cup to measure the correct dose prescribed by your doctor. Ask your pharmacist if you have any questions. Inform your doctor if your condition persists or worsens, or if you have new symptoms such as feeling agitated or hostile, or having suicidal thoughts.

SIDE EFFECTS:

See also the Warning section. Nausea, drowsiness, dizziness, fatigue, increased sweating, and trouble sleeping may occur. If any of these effects persist or worsen, notify your doctor or pharmacist promptly. Remember that your doctor has prescribed this medication because the benefit to you is greater than the risk of side effects. Many people using this medication do not have serious side effects. Tell your doctor immediately if any of these unlikely but serious side effects occur: changes in sexual interest/performance/satisfaction, uncontrolled muscle movements (e.g., tremor, twitching). Tell your doctor immediately if any of these rare but very serious side effects occur: unusual or severe mental/mood changes (including rare thoughts of suicide), easy bruising/bleeding, black stools, vomit that looks like coffee grounds, fast/irregular heartbeat, fainting, seizures, changes in the amount of urine. For males, in the very unlikely event you have a painful or prolonged erection lasting 4 or more hours, stop using this drug and seek immediate medical attention, or permanent problems could occur. A very serious allergic reaction to this drug is unlikely, but seek immediate medical attention if it occurs. Symptoms of a serious allergic reaction may include: rash, itching, swelling, severe dizziness, trouble breathing. If you notice other effects not listed above, contact your doctor or pharmacist.

PRECAUTIONS:

Before taking escitalopram, tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are allergic to it; or to citalopram; or if you have any other allergies. Before using this medication, tell your doctor or pharmacist your medical history, including: history or family history of psychiatric disorder (e.g., bipolar/manic-depressive disorder), history or family history of suicide attempts, bleeding or clotting problems, heart disease, kidney disease, liver disease, seizures, mineral problems (e.g., hyponatremia, SIADH), thyroid disease. This drug may make you dizzy or drowsy; use caution while engaging in activities requiring alertness, such as driving or using machinery. Limit alcoholic beverages. Before having surgery, tell your doctor or dentist that you are using this medication. Caution is advised when using this drug in the elderly because they may be more sensitive to the effects of the drug, especially drowsiness. This medication is not recommended for use during pregnancy. It may harm an unborn baby. Also, babies born to mothers who have used this drug during the last 3 months of pregnancy may infrequently develop withdrawal symptoms such as feeding/breathing difficulties, seizures, muscle stiffness, or constant crying. If you notice any of these symptoms in your newborn, tell the doctor promptly. Since untreated depression can be a serious condition, do not stop taking this medication unless directed by your doctor. If you are planning pregnancy, become pregnant, or think you may be pregnant, immediately discuss the benefits and risks of using this medication during pregnancy with your doctor. This medication passes into breast milk and may have undesirable effects on a nursing infant. Therefore, breast-feeding is not recommended while using this drug. Consult your doctor before breast-feeding.

DRUG INTERACTIONS:

Your healthcare professionals (e.g., doctor or pharmacist) may already be aware of any possible drug interactions and may be monitoring you for them. Do not start, stop or change the dosage of any medicine before checking with them first. This drug should not be used with the following medications because very serious interactions may occur: pimozone, drugs for weight control (e.g., phentermine, sibutramine), MAO inhibitors (e.g., furazolidone, isocarboxazid, linezolid, phenelzine, procarbazine, selegiline, tranylcypromine). Avoid taking MAO inhibitors within 2 weeks before or after treatment with this medication. If you are currently using any of these medications listed above, tell your doctor or pharmacist before starting escitalopram. Do not take this medication together with citalopram because the two medications are very similar. Ask your doctor or pharmacist for more details. Before using this medication, tell your doctor or pharmacist of all prescription and nonprescription/herbal products you may use, especially of: other SSRI antidepressants (e.g., fluoxetine, sertraline, paroxetine), other drugs for mood or behavior (e.g., bupropion, lithium), drugs that may cause bleeding (e.g., aspirin, anticoagulants such as warfarin, antiplatelet drugs such as clopidogrel, NSAIDs such as ibuprofen), anti-seizure drugs (e.g., carbamazepine), certain medications for headache (e.g., sumatriptan), cimetidine, herbal medications (e.g., ayahuasca, St. John's wort). This drug can slow down the removal of other drugs from your body by affecting certain liver enzymes. Some examples of these affected drugs include metoprolol, tramadol, trazodone, venlafaxine, and tricyclic depressants such as desipramine. Low-dose aspirin (usually 81-325 mg per day) for heart attack or stroke prevention should be

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continued unless otherwise directed by your doctor. Aspirin is similar to NSAID drugs and can increase the risk of bleeding in combination with this medication (see above). Discuss the risks and benefits with your doctor. Check all prescription and nonprescription medicine labels carefully since many contain pain relievers/fever reducers (NSAIDs such as aspirin or naproxen), which may increase the risk of side effects. Tell your doctor if you take any drugs that cause drowsiness, such as: anti-anxiety drugs (e.g., diazepam), antihistamines that cause drowsiness (e.g., diphenhydramine), medicine for sleep, muscle relaxants, narcotic pain relievers (e.g., codeine), sedatives/tranquilizers. Check the labels of all your medicines (e.g. cough-and-cold products) because they may contain drowsiness-causing ingredients. Ask your pharmacist about the safe use of those products.

NOTES:

Psychiatric/medical checkups (and possibly laboratory tests) must be done periodically to monitor your progress and check for side effects. Consult your doctor for more details. Do not share this medication with others.

MISSED DOSE:

If you miss a dose, take it as soon as you remember. If it is near the time of the next dose, skip the missed dose and resume your usual dosing schedule. Do not double the dose to catch up.

STORAGE:

Store at room temperature (77 degrees F or 25 degrees C) away from light and moisture. Brief storage between 59-86 degrees F (15-30 degrees C) is permitted. Do not store in the bathroom. Keep all medicines away from children and pets.