

Nortriptyline patient information

What is nortriptyline?

Nortriptyline is an antidepressant medicine that is used to help you stop smoking. It works by reducing the severity of withdrawal symptoms.

How should I take nortriptyline?

1. The dose of nortriptyline may be different for different people. Your doctor will usually start you on a low dose and increase this slowly.
 2. Choose a quit date when you will stop smoking (usually two to four weeks after starting nortriptyline). Make sure you try to stop smoking on your quit date. If you slip-up and smoke, try again.
- Swallow tablets whole with a full glass of water.
 - Take nortriptyline with or without food.
 - If you are taking nortriptyline once a day, take it at bedtime.
 - It may take a few weeks before you notice the full benefits of nortriptyline. Do **not** stop taking nortriptyline suddenly – if you think nortriptyline is not working for you, speak to your nurse or doctor before stopping.
 - Protect yourself from too much sunlight while being treated with nortriptyline. Use sunscreen and avoid sunbeds.

What should I do if I forget to take a dose?

Take the missed dose as soon as possible. If it is nearly time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and take the next dose at the right time. Do **not** take two doses at the same time.

Side effects of nortriptyline

Side effect	What should I do?
Feeling sleepy, drowsy or tired.	These are quite common when you first start taking nortriptyline and usually go away with time. If taking once a day, take at bedtime. Be careful when driving or using tools until you know how this medicine will affect you. You will have a greater risk of falls and injuries, especially if you are elderly. Talk to your doctor if you are concerned. Do not drink alcohol.
Feeling dizzy, faint or light-headed.	Get up slowly when rising from a sitting or lying position. You will have a greater risk of falls and injuries, especially if you are elderly. Talk to your doctor if you are concerned.
Dry mouth, constipation.	These are quite common when you first start taking nortriptyline. Tell your doctor if troublesome.
Suicidal thoughts, thoughts of harming yourself or worsening depression.	Tell your doctor immediately .
Signs of serotonin syndrome – agitation, restlessness, heavy sweating, shivering, fast heart rate or irregular heartbeat, headache, diarrhoea, rigid or twitching muscles.	You are at increased risk of serotonin syndrome if you have recently started taking nortriptyline or your dose has been increased. Tell your doctor immediately if you get any of these side effects.

Other information

- Tell your doctor if you have liver, heart, thyroid or prostate problems or if you have trouble peeing.
- Tell your doctor if you have recently had a heart attack; have problems with your heart rhythm or have diabetes.
- Tell your doctor if you have glaucoma, bipolar disorder, or if you have ever had a seizure.
- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant, planning to become pregnant or breastfeeding.
- Nortriptyline interacts with a number of medications and herbal supplements – check with your doctor or pharmacist before starting any new medications.