

Medication: Duloxetine 30 mg

What is Duloxetine?

Duloxetine belongs to the class of medications called “Serotonin Norepinephrine Reuptake Inhibitors” or “SNRIs”, initially developed to treat depression. Duloxetine works by altering the levels of certain transmitters such as noradrenalin and serotonin, in the brain.

Duloxetine is also used in the treatment of anxiety, irritable bowel syndrome (with constipation), pain, and certain symptoms of myalgic encephalomyelitis / chronic fatigue syndrome (but not the fatigue itself).

Expected Benefit:

- It usually takes 4 – 6 weeks to notice a benefit

What to expect:

- “Transition” effects
 - These symptoms are the effects of your body getting used to the medication (i.e., transition onto the medication)
 - The transition phase is different for everybody. Some people feel “not like themselves,” a bit anxious, or unusual.
 - These symptoms typically go away after 7 to 10 days
 - Please call the CCDP if the anxiety is intolerable.

Watch for possible side effects:

It is important to be aware of the side effects however, it is also important to remember that not all side effects occur in everyone. Many of the less serious side effects will improve over the first few days of taking the medication.

If you have problems with these side effects talk with your doctor or pharmacist:

- Trouble sleeping that is more than usual
- Heart burn, stomach upset
- Sexual dysfunction
- High blood pressure (Make sure your family doctor is regularly checking your blood pressure)
- Mood changes, suicidal thoughts

Stopping the medication:

This medication should not be stopped abruptly. Your doctor may advise you to reduce the dose slowly to help prevent your symptoms from returning.

How to use this medication:

- Take this medication with or without food

Dosing Schedule:

- Start with 30 mg every 2nd day
- Increase dose according to table below
- You can stay at a lower dose (stop increasing) if you get side effects (usually dry mouth). If this happens, you might want to lower the dose one step
- Maximum dose: typically 60 mg/day; doses up to 120 mg/day were studied in clinical trials but did not result in any additional benefit.

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30 mg every 2 nd day	For 2 weeks
30 mg daily	For 1 month; stay on this dose
Follow up with clinic before increasing the dose	

Drugs and Foods to Avoid:

Ask your doctor or pharmacist before using any other medication, including non-prescription medication (over-the-counter medication) and herbal products.

- Avoid dextromethorphan ("DM" cough products)
- Avoid alcohol use
- Avoid chamomile, primrose oil, fenugreek, flaxseed, 5 HTP, feverfew, fish oils, omega 3, flaxseed, ginkgo, ginseng, red clover, SAMe, willow bark, glucosamine, green tea, horse chestnut seed, St John's Wort

Please contact the Complex Chronic Diseases Program at if you have further questions about your medications.