

Medication: Nortriptyline 10 mg

What is Nortriptyline:

Nortriptyline belongs to a group of medications called **tricyclic antidepressants (TCAs)** that were first made to treat depression. It works by altering the levels of certain transmitters in the brain such as noradrenaline and serotonin. They have since been found to be effective for many different uses such as: pain, helping with sleep quality (but is not a sleeping pill), irritable bowel syndrome (with diarrhea), migraine prevention, and interstitial cystitis.

Expected Benefit:

- Usually takes weeks to notice a benefit
- You may not notice a benefit until you get to a dose of 20 – 30 mg

Watch for possible side effects:

This list of side effects is important for you to be aware of however, it is also important to remember that not all side effects happen to everyone.

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

- Dry mouth
- Hangover effect – too sleepy in the morning
- Blurred vision
- Urinary retention, trouble with urination
- Tiredness, dizziness that is more than usual
- Diarrhea or constipation

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 10 mg, 2 hrs before bed
- Increase dose according to table below
- Stop increasing the dose
 - If you reach the target dose of 70 mg
 - You can stay at a lower dose (stop increasing) if you get side effects (usually dry mouth)
 - You might want to lower the dose by 10 mg
 - Many patients can only tolerate 20 – 30 mg

Take 2 hrs before bed	
1 tab (10 mg)	For 2 weeks
2 tab (20 mg)	For 2 weeks
3 tab (30 mg)	For 2 weeks
4 tab (40 mg)	For 2 weeks
5 tab (50 mg)	For 2 weeks
6 tab (60 mg)	For 2 weeks
7 tab (70 mg)	Stay at this 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 alcohol use at the same time
- Take 2 hrs after potassium,
- Avoid yohimbine, St John's Wort, 5HTP, chamomile, ginseng, gotu kola, hawthorn, kava, lemon balm, goldenseal, passion flower, SAMe, valerian

Tips:

- If this medication upsets your stomach, try taking it with food
- This medication may make your skin sensitive to sunlight. Try to stay out of direct sunlight and wear protective clothing and a sun block with SPF 15 or higher
- If you experience dry mouth try chewing sugarless gum, taking sips of water or using a saliva substitute

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

Over the counter and herbal interactions:

- Avoid NSAIDS (e.g., ibuprofen), ASA,
- Take 2 hrs after potassium,
- Avoid alcohol use
- Don't use yohimbine, St John's Wort, 5HTP, chamomile, ginseng, gotu kola, hawthorn, kava, lemon balm, goldenseal, passion flower, SAMe, valerian