

Medication: Zopiclone 5 mg or 7.5 mg

What is Zopiclone?

Zopiclone tablets are sleeping pills (hypnotics) which work by acting on the brain to cause sleepiness. They may be used for the treatment of difficulties in falling asleep. The medication effects typically only last about 3 hours so it may not be helpful in keeping you asleep

Expected Benefit:

- A benefit can be noticed on the first night
- In some patients it loses its efficacy after a while, and may need to be switched to another drug

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 all people. Many of these less serious side effects will improve over the first few days of taking the medications.

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

- Metallic taste
- Dizziness
- Off balance
- Blurred vision
- Dry mouth
- Rarely, some individuals will still feel drowsy the next morning
- Rarely, some individuals will feel agitated instead of drowsy

Stopping the medication:

When you stop taking zopiclone, your doctor may advise you to reduce the dose slowly to help prevent your sleep problems from returning.

How to use and store this medication:

- Take this medication with or without food

Dosing Schedule:

- Take just before bedtime because it has a quick onset of action
- Start with ½ tablet at bedtime (i.e., 2.5 mg or 3.75 mg depending on whether you are prescribed a 5 mg or 7.5 mg tablet)
- Increase the dose by ½ a tablet every night or two until you can fall asleep within 20 – 30 minutes
- The usual dose range
 - 2.5 mg – 7.5 mg for the 5 mg tablets, or
 - 3.75 mg – 7.5 mg for the 7.5 mg tablets

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
- Avoid use of St. John's Wort, Valerian, kava kava, gotu kola

Tips:

- If you are feeling sleepy or tired the morning after, **do not** drive, use tools, or operate machinery until your reactions have returned to normal
- If you experience a bitter, metallic aftertaste or dry mouth try chewing sugarless gum or sugar-free sweets

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