

doxepin basics

Treats depression and anxiety. doxepin can treat depression and anxiety, but it's not a first choice medication because of its many side effects.

What to expect when starting

Here's when people typically experience benefits as well as some possible side effects. Your experience may be different.

	Hours	Days	Weeks	Months	Long term
doxepin Drug effectiveness			[Blue bar spanning Weeks and Months]		
Possible side effects†					
Drowsiness	[Red bar spanning Hours and Days]				
Constipation		[Red bar spanning Days and Weeks]			
Dry mouth		[Red bar spanning Days and Weeks]			
Changes in blood pressure	[Red bar spanning Hours and Days]				
Weight gain			[Red bar spanning Weeks and Months]		
Dizziness	[Red bar spanning Hours and Days]				

† Data on frequency of side effects is not available.

Tips from pharmacists

- It's important to keep taking doxepin even if your symptoms are getting better. It may take 6 to 8 weeks to see its full effect.
- Never stop antidepressant medicines without talking to your doctor. Suddenly stopping doxepin can cause withdrawal symptoms such as nausea and headache.
- Take doxepin at bedtime if it makes you drowsy. Avoid driving or doing other tasks or actions that call for you to be alert until you know how this medicine will affect you.
- Tell your doctor if you notice sudden mood changes or thoughts of harming yourself.
- Avoid drinking alcohol while taking this medication.

Risks and warnings

The FDA has identified these as possible serious or life-threatening risks with this medication. Contact your doctor if you experience any of these.

Suicidal thoughts or behavior

doxepin, like other antidepressants, may increase the risk of suicidal thoughts or behavior, especially in children, teens, and young adults. Watch for worsening depression or any unusual changes in mood or behavior, especially during the first few months of treatment or when your dose changes. Caregivers and family members should also watch out for these behavioral changes. Children under 12 years of age shouldn't take doxepin.

Unmasking of bipolar disorder

doxepin shouldn't be used to treat bipolar disorder. Bipolar disorder can easily be mistaken for depression but taking doxepin can make bipolar disorder worse. Before starting this medication, your doctor will make sure you don't have bipolar disorder.

Serotonin syndrome

Taking doxepin with other antidepressants can increase the risk of serious side effects, including serotonin syndrome which can be very dangerous. If you were taking MAO inhibitors for depression, talk to your doctor before you start doxepin. Go to the emergency room right away if you have a very high fever, increased sweating or have sudden changes in your mood.