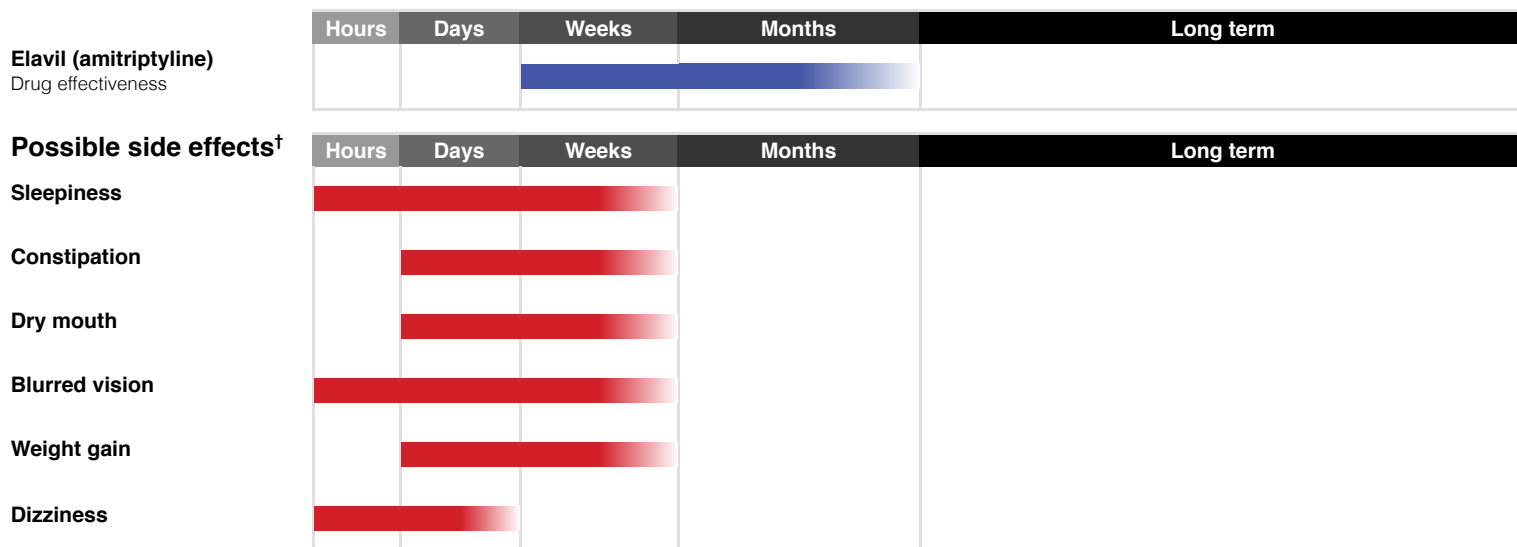


**Improves mood.** Elavil (amitriptyline) regulates mood and treats nerve pain, but has more side effects than alternatives.

## What to expect when starting

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



† Data on frequency of side effects is not available.

## Tips from pharmacists

- Take at bedtime if it makes you drowsy.
- Talk to your doctor before discontinuing this medicine. Do not suddenly stop taking it or else you may experience unpleasant withdrawal symptoms.
- Tell your doctor right away if you notice sudden mood changes or unusual thoughts.
- Avoid driving and doing other tasks or actions that call for you to be alert until you see how this drug affects you.
- Be patient if you're using this medicine to treat depression. It can take up to several weeks to feel the full effects. You may need to try a few different medicines until you find one that works for you.

## 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

Elavil (amitriptyline) may increase the risk of suicidal thoughts or behavior, especially if you're under 24. Talk to your doctor or get emergency help right away if your mood starts to worsen or you have any unusual changes in mood or behavior. This can happen when you first start the medication or when your dose increases. Elavil (amitriptyline) is not approved for use by children younger than age 18.

### Mania

Sometimes, depression is the first symptom of bipolar disorder. Treating someone with bipolar disorder with an antidepressant alone can cause a manic episode which includes feelings of great excitement, euphoria, delusions, and overactivity. Your doctor will ask about personal and family history of bipolar disorder or other mental illnesses before starting you on Elavil (amitriptyline).

### Heart problems

Elavil (amitriptyline) has a higher risk of affecting heart rate than other antidepressants. If you have a history of heart disease (including heart attack, stroke, fast/uncontrolled heart rate, or irregular heartbeat), talk to your doctor to see if Elavil (amitriptyline) is safe for you to use.