

# Typical neuroleptics (Antipsychotics)

## Information for patients

### Glossary of Drug Names

Generic Name	Brand Name
Chlorpromazine	Largactil
Droperidol injection	Droleptan
flupenthixol decanoate	Fluanxol
fluphenazine decanoate	Modecate
haloperidol	Serenace
haloperidol decanoate	Haldol
pericyazine	Neulactil
pimozide	Orap
thioridazine	Aldazine/Melleril
thiothixene	Navane
trifluoperazine	Stelazine
zuclophenthixol acetate	Clopixol Acuphase
zuclophenthixol decanoate	Clopixol Depot

### What are they for?

These medicines are useful if you are feeling confused or frightened, or if you hear voices in your head or when no-one is near, or if you have thoughts that are unpleasant or disturb you. They are also used to control hallucinations and delusions.

### How are they taken?

Most people take neuroleptics in tablet form. For others an injection lasts longer and saves them from having to take tablets every day.

### When will they work?

Most people feel calmer within a few hours. You should begin to feel better in the next couple of days and gradually improve over the next six weeks. The medicines do take time to work.

### How much do I need?

You may start with a low dose. This will be gradually increased to find the right amount. Telling your doctor how you feel will help work out the right amount.

### What happens if I miss a dose?

If you forget to take a dose at the normal time, take it when you remember. If it is nearly time for the next dose, then take the normal amount. Do not take a double dose.

### How long will I have to take them?

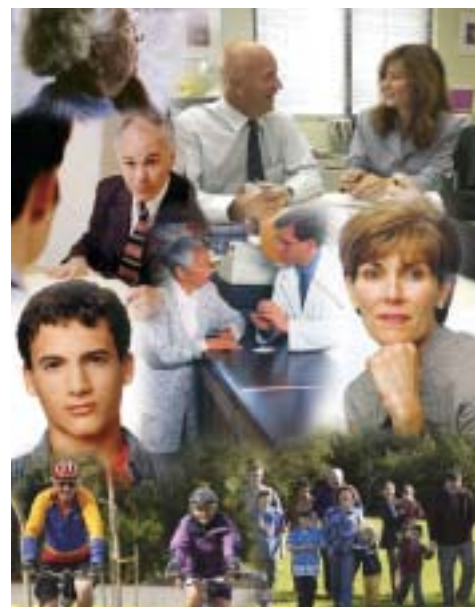
Your doctor will discuss the likely benefits of taking this medication and how long the treatment may last. Feeling well does not mean that you can stop taking the tablets. It means that the tablets are keeping you well. Neuroleptics are not addictive. Talk to your doctor before you stop taking the tablets.

### What else should I tell my doctor?

- If you feel that you are getting ill again, visit your doctor. Different treatment can quickly help.
- (For women) If you miss a period, think that you may be pregnant or if you intend getting pregnant.

### What about side effects?

You may get side effects before you start to feel better. Side effects may be troublesome, but they can often be helped by adjusting the medication or by other methods. Do not stop taking your medication abruptly, but talk to your doctor or pharmacist about any concerns you have.



**If you experience any side effects, report them to your doctor.**

#### Common side effects include:

- Unusual movements
- Drowsiness
- Restlessness
- Weight gain
- Stiffness
- Constipation
- Dry mouth
- Blurred vision
- Changes in your menstrual period.

#### Uncommon side effects include:

- Severe stiffness
- Sore mouth, gums or throat
- Severe dizziness
- Urine is hard to pass.

Should you experience any of these uncommon side effects while taking neuroleptics, you need to contact your doctor urgently.

### What other things should I be careful with?

- Driving a car or operating machinery your reactions may be slower.
- Alcohol, which may make you more dizzy or sleepier than usual.
- Marijuana, which is likely to make you ill again, despite taking neuroleptic medication.
- If you are taking chlorpromazine (Largactil) then avoid direct sunlight as you may be more prone to serious sunburn. Wear a shirt and hat and use a 15-plus sunscreen.
- Keeping cool in hot weather, as these medicines can make you overheat.

## Antiparkinsonian medication

### Glossary of Drug Names

Generic Name	Brand Name
benzhexol	Artane
benztropine	Cogentin
biperiden	Akineton

### What are they for?

Antiparkinsonian medications relieve some of the side effects of neuroleptic medications. For example, they may reduce:

- Muscle spasm
- Twitching
- Dribbling
- Stiffness
- Shaking
- Restlessness.

### What about side effects?

Antiparkinsonian medication can still have side effects of their own. Most of these disappear after a few weeks. If you experience any side effects, report them to your doctor.

### Common side effects include:

- Dry mouth
- Constipation
- Blurred vision
- Drowsiness.

Report any of the following uncommon side effects to your doctor straight away.

### Uncommon side effects include:

- Feeling confused
- Feeling very weak
- Rashes or itchy skin
- Urine is hard to pass.

**Always tell any other doctor, pharmacist or dentist you may visit that you use this medicine. Some medicines can react with others, even those you buy without a prescription.**

## Note to health professionals:

This leaflet should not replace verbal counselling. In particular, this leaflet is not a substitute for informed consent. This leaflet provides information for patients taking typical neuroleptics. Reference to any drug or substance does not necessarily imply recommendation by the Victorian Department of Human Services for its use.

Published by the Metropolitan Health and Aged Care Services Division, Victorian Government Department of Human Services, Melbourne Victoria.