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2. Elavil

# Elavil

**Generic name:** [amitriptyline](#) [ *a-mee-TRIP-ti-leen* ]

**Drug class:** [Tricyclic antidepressants](#)

Medically reviewed by [Philip Thornton, DipPharm](#). Last updated on Jul 31, 2023.

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The Elavil brand name has been **discontinued** in the U.S. If generic versions of this product have been approved by the FDA, there may be [generic equivalents available](#).

## What is Elavil?

Elavil is a tricyclic antidepressant with sedative effects. Amitriptyline affects certain chemical messengers (neurotransmitters) that communicate between brain cells and help regulate mood.

Elavil is a prescription medicine used to treat symptoms of [depression](#).

Elavil may also be used for purposes not listed in this medication guide.

## Warnings

You should not use Elavil if you have recently had a [heart attack](#).

Do not use Elavil if you have used an MAO inhibitor in the past 14 days, such as [isocarboxazid](#), [linezolid](#), [methylene blue](#) injection, [phenelzine](#), [rasagiline](#), [selegiline](#), or [tranylcypromine](#).

You may have thoughts about suicide when you first start taking an antidepressant such as amitriptyline, especially if you are younger than 24 years old. Your doctor will need to check you at regular visits for at least the first 12 weeks of treatment.

Report any new or worsening symptoms to your doctor, such as: mood or behavior changes, anxiety, panic attacks, trouble sleeping, or if you feel impulsive, irritable, agitated, hostile, aggressive, restless, hyperactive (mentally or physically), more depressed, or have thoughts about suicide or hurting yourself.

## Before taking this medicine

You should not use Elavil if you are allergic to amitriptyline, or:

- if you have recently had a heart attack.

Do not use Elavil if you have used an MAO inhibitor in the past 14 days. A dangerous drug interaction could occur. MAO inhibitors include isocarboxazid, linezolid, methylene blue injection, phenelzine, rasagiline, selegiline, tranylcypromine, and others.

Tell your doctor if you have used an "SSRI" antidepressant in the past 5 weeks, such as [citalopram](#), [escitalopram](#), [fluoxetine](#) (Prozac), [fluvoxamine](#), [paroxetine](#), [sertraline](#) (Zoloft), [trazodone](#), or [vilazodone](#).

To make sure Elavil is safe for you, tell your doctor if you have ever had:

- [bipolar disorder](#) (manic-depression) or [schizophrenia](#);
- mental illness or psychosis;
- liver disease;
- heart disease;
- a heart attack, stroke, or [seizures](#);
- diabetes (amitriptyline may raise or lower blood sugar);
- [glaucoma](#); or
- problems with urination.

Some young people have thoughts about suicide when first taking an antidepressant. Your doctor should check your progress at regular visits. Your family or other caregivers should also be alert to changes in your mood or symptoms.

Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or breastfeeding.

Elavil is not approved for use by anyone younger than 12 years old.

 [Elavil pregnancy and breastfeeding warnings](#) (more detail)

## How should I take Elavil?

Take Elavil exactly as prescribed by your doctor. Follow all directions on your prescription label and read all medication guides or instruction sheets. Your doctor may occasionally change your dose.

It may take up to 4 weeks before your symptoms improve. Keep using the medication as directed and tell your doctor if your symptoms do not improve.

If you need surgery, tell your surgeon you currently use Elavil. You may need to stop for a short time.

Do not stop using Elavil suddenly, or you could have unpleasant withdrawal symptoms. Ask your doctor how to safely stop using Elavil.

Store at room temperature away from moisture and heat. Keep the bottle tightly closed when not in use.

## Dosing information

**Usual Adult Dose for Depression:**

#### OUTPATIENTS:

- Initial dose: 75 mg orally per day in divided doses; this may be increased to 150 mg/day (if needed)
- Maintenance dose: 40 to 100 mg orally per day
- Maximum dose: 150 mg/day

Alternate outpatient treatment regimen: 50 to 100 mg orally as a single dose at bedtime; this may be increased by 25 or 50 mg as needed at bedtime to a total of 150 mg/day

#### INPATIENTS:

- Initial dose: 100 mg orally per day
- Maintenance dose: 40 to 100 mg orally as a single dose at bedtime
- Maximum dose: 300 mg/day

#### Comments:

- Dose increases should preferably be made in the late afternoon or at bedtime due to the sedative effect.
- The full therapeutic effect may take as long as 30 days to develop.
- Maintenance doses should be reduced to the lowest amount that will maintain relief of symptoms when satisfactory improvement has been obtained.
- Maintenance therapy should be continued for 3 months or longer to lessen the possibility of relapse.

Use: Relief of symptoms of depression

#### Usual Geriatric Dose for Depression:

10 mg orally 3 times a day AND 20 mg orally once a day at bedtime

#### Comments:

- The full therapeutic effect may take as long as 30 days to develop.
- Elderly patients should be monitored carefully and serum levels obtained as clinically appropriate.
- Dose adjustments should be made according to clinical response.

Use: Relief of symptoms of depression

#### Usual Pediatric Dose for Depression:

12 years or older: 10 mg orally 3 times a day AND 20 mg orally once a day at bedtime

#### Comments:

- The full therapeutic effect may take as long as 30 days to develop.
- Dose adjustments should be made according to clinical response.

Use: Relief of symptoms of depression

 [Detailed Elavil dosage information](#)

## What happens if I miss a dose?

Take the medicine as soon as you can, but skip the missed dose if it is almost time for your next dose. Do not take two doses at one time.

# What happens if I overdose?

Seek emergency medical attention or call the Poison Help line at 1-800-222-1222. **An overdose of amitriptyline can be fatal.**

Overdose symptoms may include irregular heart rhythm, feeling like you might pass out, seizures, or coma.

## What to avoid

**Do not drink alcohol.** Dangerous side effects or death can occur when alcohol is combined with amitriptyline.

Avoid driving or hazardous activity until you know how Elavil will affect you. Your reactions could be impaired.

Avoid exposure to sunlight or tanning beds. Amitriptyline can make you sunburn more easily. Wear protective clothing and use sunscreen (SPF 30 or higher) when you are outdoors.

## Elavil side effects

Get emergency medical help if you have **signs of an allergic reaction to Elavil:** [hives](#); difficulty breathing; swelling of your face, lips, tongue, or throat.

Report any new or worsening symptoms to your doctor, such as: mood or behavior changes, [anxiety](#), [panic attacks](#), trouble sleeping, or if you feel impulsive, irritable, agitated, hostile, aggressive, restless, hyperactive (mentally or physically), more depressed, or have thoughts about suicide or hurting yourself.

Call your doctor at once if you have:

- **signs of a blood clot** - sudden numbness or weakness, problems with vision or speech, swelling or redness in an arm or leg;
- unusual thoughts or behavior;
- a light-headed feeling, like you might pass out;
- chest pain or pressure, pain spreading to your jaw or shoulder, [nausea](#), sweating;
- pounding heartbeats or fluttering in your chest;
- confusion, hallucinations;
- a seizure (convulsions);
- painful or difficult urination;
- severe [constipation](#);
- easy bruising, unusual bleeding; or
- fever, chills, [sore throat](#), mouth sores.

Common Elavil side effects may include:

- constipation, [diarrhea](#);
- nausea, [vomiting](#), [upset stomach](#);
- mouth pain, unusual taste, black tongue;

- appetite or weight changes;
- urinating less than usual;
- itching or rash;
- breast swelling (in men or women); or
- decreased sex drive, [impotence](#), or difficulty having an orgasm.

This is not a complete list of side effects and others may occur. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

 [Elavil side effects](#) (more detail)

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#### Reviews & ratings

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## What other drugs will affect Elavil?

Taking this medicine with other drugs that make you sleepy can worsen this effect. Ask your doctor before taking Elavil with a sleeping pill, narcotic pain medicine, muscle relaxer, or medicine for anxiety, depression, or seizures.

Sometimes it is not safe to use certain medications at the same time. Some drugs can affect your blood levels of other drugs you take, which may increase side effects or make the medications less effective.

Tell your doctor about all your other medicines, especially:

- other [antidepressants](#);
- medicine to treat depression, anxiety, mood disorders, or mental illness;
- cold or allergy medicine (Benadryl and others);
- medicine to treat [Parkinson's disease](#);

- medicine to treat stomach problems, [motion sickness](#), or [irritable bowel syndrome](#);
- medicine to treat [overactive bladder](#); or
- bronchodilator [asthma](#) medication.

This list is not complete. Other drugs may interact with amitriptyline, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, [vitamins](#), and [herbal products](#). Not all possible drug interactions are listed here.

 [Elavil drug interactions](#) (more detail)

## Does Elavil interact with my other drugs?






Enter medications to view a detailed interaction report using our [Drug Interaction Checker](#).

Elavil

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- Does amitriptyline cause high blood pressure? 
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Further information

Remember, keep this and all other medicines out of the reach of children, never share your medicines with others, and use Elavil only for the indication prescribed.


Always consult your healthcare provider to ensure the information displayed on this page applies to your personal circumstances.

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DRUG STATUS

Availability

 Discontinued

[Pregnancy & Lactation](#)

 Risk data available

CSA Schedule\*

N/A Not a controlled drug

10+  
years

Approval History

FDA approved 1961



User Reviews & Ratings

7.8 / 10

[206 Reviews](#)

## Images

Elavil 10 mg (ELAVIL 40)



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