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## 2. Duloxetine

# Duloxetine

**Generic name:** duloxetine [ *du-LOX-e-teen* ]

**Brand names:** [Cymbalta](#), [Drizalma Sprinkle](#), [Irenka](#)

**Dosage form:** oral delayed release capsule (20 mg; 30 mg; 40 mg; 60 mg)

**Drug class:** [Serotonin-norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors](#)

Medically reviewed by [Philip Thornton, DipPharm](#). Last updated on Mar 3, 2025.

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## What is duloxetine?

[Duloxetine](#) is a selective serotonin and norepinephrine reuptake inhibitor antidepressant (SSNRI). Duloxetine affects chemicals in the brain that may be unbalanced in people with [depression](#).

Duloxetine is used to treat [major depressive disorder](#) in adults. It is also used to treat general [anxiety disorder](#) in adults and children who are at least 7 years old.

Duloxetine is also used in adults to treat nerve pain caused by diabetes (diabetic neuropathy), or chronic muscle or joint pain (such as low back pain and [osteoarthritis pain](#)).

Some brands of duloxetine are also used to treat fibromyalgia (a chronic pain disorder). **Drizalma** is for treating fibromyalgia only in adults. **Cymbalta** may be used to treat fibromyalgia in adults and children at least 13 years old.

## Warnings

Do not take duloxetine within 5 days before or 14 days after you have used an MAO inhibitor, such as [isocarboxazid](#), [linezolid](#), [methylene blue](#) injection, [phenelzine](#), [tranylcypromine](#), and others. A dangerous drug interaction could occur.

People with depression or mental illness may have thoughts about suicide. Some young people may have increased suicidal thoughts when first starting a medicine to treat depression. **Tell your doctor right away if you have any sudden changes in mood or behavior, or thoughts about suicide.**

**Do not stop using duloxetine without first talking to your doctor.**

## Before taking this medicine

You should not use duloxetine if you are allergic to it.

Do not take duloxetine within 5 days before or 14 days after you have used an MAO inhibitor, such as [isocarboxazid](#), [linezolid](#), [methylene blue](#) injection, [phenelzine](#), or [tranylcypromine](#). A dangerous drug interaction could occur.

Tell your doctor if you also use stimulant medicine, opioid medicine, [herbal products](#), or medicine for [depression](#), mental illness, [Parkinson's disease](#), [migraine](#) headaches, serious infections, or prevention of [nausea and vomiting](#). An interaction with duloxetine could cause a serious condition called serotonin syndrome.

Duloxetine is not approved for use by anyone younger than 7 years old.

To make sure duloxetine is safe for you, tell your doctor if you have:

- heart problems, [high blood pressure](#);
- liver or kidney disease;
- slow digestion;
- a seizure;
- bleeding problems;
- sexual problems;
- narrow-angle [glaucoma](#);
- [bipolar disorder](#) (manic depression);
- [drug addiction](#) or suicidal thoughts; or
- if you drink large amounts of alcohol.

People with depression or mental illness may have thoughts about suicide. Some young people may have increased suicidal thoughts when first starting a medicine to treat depression. Stay alert to changes in your mood or symptoms. Your family or caregivers should also watch for sudden changes in your behavior.

Taking an SNRI antidepressant during late pregnancy could increase your risk of excessive bleeding after you give birth, and may cause serious medical complications in the baby. However, stopping the medicine may not be safe if you have a relapse of depression. **Do not start or stop duloxetine without asking your doctor.**

If you are pregnant, your name may be listed on a pregnancy registry to track the effects of duloxetine on the baby.

If you are breastfeeding, tell your doctor if you notice drowsiness, feeding problems, and slow weight gain in the nursing baby.

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

## How should I take duloxetine?

Take duloxetine 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.

Taking duloxetine in higher doses or more often than prescribed will not make it more effective, and may increase side effects.

Swallow the capsule whole and do not crush, chew, break, or open it.

You may take duloxetine with or without food.

Your blood pressure will need to be checked often.

**Tell your doctor if you have any changes in sexual function**, such as loss of interest in sex, trouble having an orgasm, or (in men) problems with erections or ejaculation. Some sexual problems can be treated.

Your symptoms may not improve for up to 4 weeks.

**Do not stop using duloxetine suddenly**, or you could have unpleasant symptoms (such as agitation, confusion, tingling or electric shock feelings). Ask your doctor before stopping the medicine.

Store at room temperature away from moisture and heat.

 [Duloxetine patient tips](#) (more detail)

## Dosing information

### Usual Adult Dose for Depression:

Initial dose: 20 mg to 30 mg orally 2 times a day

Maintenance dose: 60 mg per day, given either once a day OR 30 mg orally 2 times a day

Maximum dose: 120 mg/day.

### Usual Adult Dose for Fibromyalgia:

Initial dose: 30 mg orally once a day for at least 1 week

Maintenance dose: 30 to 60 mg orally once a day.

### Usual Adult Dose for Generalized Anxiety Disorder:

Initial dose: 60 mg orally once a day

Maintenance dose: 60 to 120 mg orally once a day

Maximum dose: 120 mg/day.

### Usual Adult Dose for Pain:

Initial dose: 30 to 60 mg orally once a day

Maintenance dose: 60 mg orally once a day.

### Usual Adult Dose for Neuropathic Pain:

Initial dose: 30 to 60 mg orally once a day

Maintenance dose: 60 mg orally once a day.

### Usual Adult Dose for Chronic Pain:

Initial dose: 30 to 60 mg orally once a day

Maintenance dose: 60 mg orally once a day.

### Usual Geriatric Dose for Generalized Anxiety Disorder:

Initial dose: 30 mg orally once a day for at least 2 weeks

Maintenance dose: 60 mg orally once a day

Maximum dose: 120 mg/day.

## Usual Pediatric Dose for Generalized Anxiety Disorder:

7 to 17 years:

- Initial dose: 30 mg orally once a day for at least 2 weeks
- Maintenance dose: 30 to 60 mg orally once a day
- Maximum dose: 120 mg/day.

## Usual Pediatric Dose for Fibromyalgia:

13 years and older:

- Initial dose: 30 mg orally once a day for at least 1 week
- Maintenance dose: 30 to 60 mg orally once a day.

 [Detailed Duloxetine 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.

Overdose symptoms may include [vomiting](#), [dizziness](#) or drowsiness, [seizures](#), fast heartbeats, fainting, or coma.

## What should I avoid while taking duloxetine?

Ask your doctor before taking a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) such as aspirin, ibuprofen, naproxen, Advil, Aleve, Motrin, and others. Using an NSAID with duloxetine may cause you to bruise or bleed easily.

Avoid driving or hazardous activity until you know how duloxetine will affect you. Your reactions could be impaired. Dizziness or fainting can cause falls, accidents, or severe injuries.

Avoid getting up too fast from a sitting or lying position, or you may feel dizzy.

Drinking alcohol may increase your risk of liver damage, especially if you take **Drizalma**.

## Duloxetine side effects

Get emergency medical help if you have **signs of an allergic reaction to duloxetine** ([hives](#), difficult breathing, swelling in your face or throat) **or a severe skin reaction** (fever, [sore throat](#), burning eyes, skin pain, red or purple [skin rash](#) with blistering and peeling).

**Tell your doctor right away if you have new or sudden changes in mood or behavior, including** new or worse depression or anxiety, panic attacks, trouble sleeping, or if you feel impulsive, irritable, agitated, hostile, aggressive, restless, more active or talkative, or have thoughts about suicide or hurting yourself.

Call your doctor at once if you have:

- pounding heartbeats or fluttering in your chest;
- a light-headed feeling, like you might pass out;
- easy bruising, unusual bleeding;
- vision changes;
- painful or difficult urination;
- **liver problems** - right-sided upper stomach pain, itching, dark urine, [jaundice](#) (yellowing of the skin or eyes);
- **low blood sodium** - [headache](#), confusion, problems with thinking or memory, weakness, feeling unsteady; or
- **manic episodes** - racing thoughts, increased energy, decreased need for sleep, risk-taking behavior, being agitated or talkative.

**Seek medical attention right away if you have symptoms of serotonin syndrome, such as:** [agitation](#), hallucinations, fever, sweating, shivering, [fast heart rate](#), muscle stiffness, twitching, loss of coordination, [nausea](#), vomiting, or [diarrhea](#).

Common duloxetine side effects may include:

- drowsiness;
- nausea, [constipation](#), loss of appetite;
- dry mouth; or
- increased sweating.

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.

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

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## What other drugs will affect duloxetine?

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.

Ask your doctor before taking a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) such as [aspirin](#), [ibuprofen](#), [naproxen](#), [Advil](#), [Aleve](#), [Motrin](#), and others. Using an NSAID with duloxetine may cause you to bruise or bleed easily.

Many drugs can interact with duloxetine. This includes prescription and over-the-counter medicines, [vitamins](#), and [herbal products](#). Not all possible interactions are listed here. Tell your doctor about all other medicines you use.

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

## Does duloxetine interact with my other drugs?

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

duloxetine

+

Enter a drug name

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- [Can I take Cymbalta \(duloxetine\) and Trintellix \(vortioxetine\) together?](#)

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## Patient resources

### Other brands

[Cymbalta](#), [Drizalma Sprinkle](#), [Irenka](#)

## Professional resources

- [DULoxetine Hydrochloride monograph](#)
- [Duloxetine Capsules \(FDA\)](#)

### Other brands

[Cymbalta](#), [Drizalma Sprinkle](#)

## Related treatment guides

- [Back Pain](#)
- [Chronic Fatigue Syndrome](#)
- [Anxiety](#)
- [Bipolar Disorder](#)

## Further information

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

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


circumstances.

[Medical Disclaimer](#)


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DRUG STATUS

**Availability**  
**Rx** Prescription only

**Pregnancy & Lactation**  
 Risk data available

**CSA Schedule\***  
**N/A** Not a controlled drug

**Approval History**  
 Drug history at FDA



User Reviews & Ratings

6.2 / 10

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Images

Duloxetine Hydrochloride Delayed-Release 30 mg (ap DLX30)



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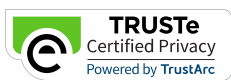
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