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2. Lunesta

Lunesta

Pronunciation: *lu-nes-ta*

Generic name: [eszopiclone](#)

Dosage form: oral tablet (1 mg, 2 mg, 3 mg)

Drug class: [Miscellaneous anxiolytics, sedatives and hypnotics](#)

Medically reviewed by [Carmen Pope, BPharm](#). Last updated on Nov 7, 2024.

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What is Lunesta?

Lunesta is a sedative, also called a hypnotic. It affects chemicals in your brain that may be unbalanced in people with sleep problems (insomnia).

Lunesta (eszopiclone) is used to treat [insomnia](#). Symptoms include trouble falling asleep or waking up often during the night. Lunesta's effects typically begin within 30 minutes and it helps reduce the time it takes to fall asleep and increases the total time spent sleeping.

Lunesta's **mechanism of action** is thought to involve enhancing the effects of GABA, the main inhibitory neurotransmitter in the brain. This slows down brain activity and promotes sleep. Lunesta is not a benzodiazepine but it has benzodiazepine-like effects; notably a more selective binding profile that targets specific GABA receptors involved in sleep. Lunesta belongs to the drug class called non-benzodiazepine sedative-hypnotics.

Lunesta gained FDA approval on December 15, 2004. Lunesta is a **Schedule IV controlled substance** which means there are limits on how much can be dispensed because of its potential for abuse and dependence.

- Keep Lunesta in a safe place to prevent misuse and abuse.
- Selling or giving away Lunesta may harm others, and is against the law.

Lunesta is [available as a generic](#) under the name eszopiclone.

Lunesta side effects

The most common side effects of Lunesta are:

- an unpleasant taste in the mouth or a dry mouth
- day-time drowsiness or a "hangover" feeling. You may still feel drowsy the next day after taking Lunesta. Do not drive or do other dangerous activities after taking Lunesta until you feel fully awake
- dizziness

- headache
- symptoms of the common cold.

Serious side effects and warnings

Lunesta carries a **Boxed Warning** for Complex Sleep Behaviors.

Complex Sleep Behaviors have caused serious injury and death. After taking Lunesta, you may get up out of bed while not being fully awake and do an activity that you do not know you are doing (complex sleep behaviors). The next morning, you may not remember that you did anything during the night. These activities may occur with Lunesta whether or not you drink alcohol or take other medicines that make you sleepy. Reported activities and behaviors include doing activities when you are asleep like:

- making and eating food
- talking on the phone
- having sex
- driving a car ("sleep-driving")
- sleepwalking.

Stop taking Lunesta and call your healthcare provider right away if you find out that you have done any of the above activities after taking Lunesta.

- See [Is Ambien-Tweeting or Sleep-Tweeting a thing?](#) for more information about complex sleep behaviors with nonbenzodiazepine hypnotics.

The morning after you take Lunesta **your ability to drive safely and think clearly** may be decreased. You also may experience sleepiness during the day. Until you know how this medication will affect you during waking hours, be careful if you drive, operate machinery, pilot an airplane, or do anything that requires you to be awake and alert.

Worsening depression, including suicidal thoughts and actions, has been reported in patients with pre-existing depression in association with the use of sedatives such as Lunesta. Tell your healthcare provider if your mood worsens or you have thoughts of harming yourself.

Lunesta will make you fall asleep. **Never take this medication during your normal waking hours**, unless you have at least 8 hours to dedicate to sleeping.

Do not drink alcohol while you are taking Lunesta. It can increase some of the side effects, including drowsiness.

Lunesta may be **habit-forming** and should be used only by the person it was prescribed for. Lunesta should never be shared with another person, especially someone who has a history of drug abuse or addiction. Keep the medication in a secure place where others cannot get to it.

You may have **withdrawal symptoms** if you stop taking Lunesta after taking it over several days in a row. Do not stop taking this medicine suddenly without first talking to your doctor. You may need to taper off the dosage (use less and less) before you stop the medication completely.

Lunesta may cause a severe allergic reaction. Stop taking Lunesta and get emergency medical help if you have signs of an allergic reaction to Lunesta such as [hives](#); [nausea](#), [vomiting](#); difficulty breathing; or swelling of your face, lips, tongue, or throat.

Call your doctor at once if you have:

- [anxiety](#), depression, aggression, [agitation](#);
- memory problems, unusual thoughts or behavior;
- thoughts of hurting yourself; or
- confusion, hallucinations (hearing or seeing things).

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 the FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

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

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Before taking

Do not take Lunesta if you:

- are allergic to Lunesta, eszopiclone, or any of the inactive ingredients in the tablets
- have ever experienced a complex sleep behavior (such as driving a car, making and eating food, talking on the phone, or having sex while not fully awake) after taking Lunesta or any other sleep medicine
- drank alcohol that evening or before bed
- take other medicines that can make you sleepy. Talk to your doctor about all of your medicines. Your doctor will tell you if you can take Lunesta with your other medicines.
- cannot get a full night's sleep
- are younger than 18 years old.

Lunesta is not approved for use by anyone younger than 18 years old.

Before starting Lunesta, tell your doctor about all of your health conditions, including if you:

- have a history of depression, mental illness, or suicidal thoughts
- have a history of drug, substance, or alcohol abuse or addiction
- have ever abused or been dependent on prescription medicines
- have liver disease
- have a breathing disorder
- have depression, a mental illness, or suicidal thoughts
- are pregnant or planning to become pregnant
- are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed.

The sedative effects of Lunesta may be stronger in older adults and accidental falls and injuries are more common in elderly patients who take sedatives.

Pregnancy

It is not known if Lunesta will harm an unborn baby. Talk to your healthcare provider about the risks associated with Lunesta use during pregnancy.

Breastfeeding

It is not known if Lunesta passes into breastmilk. Talk to your healthcare provider about the best way to feed your baby if you are taking Lunesta.

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

How should I take Lunesta?

Take Lunesta exactly as it was prescribed for you. Do not take more Lunesta than is prescribed for you.

- Take Lunesta right before you get into bed.
- Do not take Lunesta with or right after a meal.
- Do not take Lunesta unless you are able to get a full night's sleep, and there are at least 7 to 8 hours before you must be active again.

Call your doctor if your insomnia worsens or is not better within 7 to 10 days. This may mean that there is another condition causing your sleep problems.

Lunesta may be habit-forming. **Misuse can cause addiction, overdose, or death.** Keep the medication in a place where others cannot get to it. Selling or giving away this medicine is against the law.

Do not stop using Lunesta suddenly after taking it over several days in a row, or you could have unpleasant withdrawal symptoms. Ask your doctor how to safely stop using this medicine.

Insomnia symptoms may also return after you stop taking Lunesta and may be even worse than before. Tell your doctor if your insomnia worsens after stopping Lunesta.

Lunesta dosing

Use the lowest effective Lunesta dose.

Usual Adult Lunesta Dose for Insomnia:

Initial dose: Lunesta 1 mg orally, once a day immediately before bedtime.

- The dosage of Lunesta may be increased to 2 mg or 3 mg if insomnia persists after 7 to 10 days of treatment, but doing this may increase the risk of sleepiness the next day.
- The maximum dose of Lunesta is 3 mg/day.

Usual Geriatric Lunesta Dose for Insomnia:

Initial dose: Lunesta 1 mg orally, once a day immediately before bedtime.

- The dosage of Lunesta may be increased to 2 mg if insomnia persists after 7 to 10 days of treatment, but doing this may increase the risk of sleepiness the next day.
- The maximum dose of Lunesta is 2 mg/day.

 [Detailed Lunesta dosage information](#)

What happens if I miss a dose?

Since Lunesta is taken only at bedtime, you will not be on a frequent dosing schedule. Never take this medicine if you do not have at least 7 to 8 hours to sleep before being active again.

Do not take two doses at one time.

What happens if I overdose?

If you take too much Lunesta or overdose, seek emergency medical attention or call the Poison Help line at 1-800-222-1222. **An overdose of eszopiclone can be fatal, especially when it is taken together with other medications that can cause drowsiness.**

What to avoid

Avoid taking Lunesta during travel, such as to sleep on an airplane. You may be awakened before the effects of the medication have worn off. Amnesia (forgetfulness) is more common if you do not get at least 8 hours of sleep after taking Lunesta.

Avoid drinking alcohol with Lunesta. Dangerous side effects or death could occur.

Avoid taking Lunesta within 1 hour after eating a high-fat or heavy meal. This will make it harder for your body to absorb the medication.

Lunesta can cause side effects that may impair your thinking or reactions. **You may still feel sleepy the next day after taking this medicine.** Until you know how this medicine will affect you during waking hours, be careful if you drive, operate machinery, pilot an airplane, or do anything that requires you to be awake and alert.

What other drugs will affect Lunesta?

Tell your doctor about all of the medicines you take including prescription and nonprescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. Medicines can interact with each other, sometimes causing serious side effects.

Do not take Lunesta with other medicines that can make you sleepy.

- Using Lunesta with other drugs that make you drowsy or slow your breathing can cause dangerous side effects or death.
- Ask your doctor before using opioid medication, an antihistamine, another sleep medicine, a muscle relaxant, or a medicine for anxiety or [seizures](#).

Know the medicines you take. Keep a list of your medicines with you to show your doctor and pharmacist each time you get a new medicine. This is not a complete list of interactions. See the [Lunesta Prescribing Information](#) for a complete list.

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

Does Lunesta interact with my other drugs?

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

Lunesta

+

Enter a drug name

Add

Lunesta storage

Store at room temperature away from moisture and heat. Keep track of your medicine. You should be aware if anyone is using it improperly or without a prescription.

Lunesta ingredients

Active Ingredient: eszopiclone

Inactive Ingredients: calcium phosphate, colloidal silicon dioxide, croscarmellose sodium, hypromellose, lactose, magnesium stearate, microcrystalline cellulose, polyethylene glycol, titanium dioxide, and triacetin. In addition, both the 1 mg and 3 mg tablets contain FD&C Blue #2.

Available as Lunesta 1 mg, Lunesta 2 mg, and Lunesta 3 mg tablets.

Who makes Lunesta?

Waylis Therapeutics LLC manufactures Lunesta.

Popular FAQ

Lunesta vs Ambien: How do they compare?



Why is Lunesta (eszopiclone) a controlled substance?



How long does Lunesta (eszopiclone) take to work?



Can you take Lunesta (eszopiclone) every night?



Is "Ambien-Tweeting" or "Sleep-Tweeting" a Thing?



What are the strongest sleeping pills?



[View more FAQ...](#)

References

1. [Lunesta Prescribing Information Waylis Therapeutics LLC](#)
2. [Lunesta Package Insert](#)

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Professional resources

- [Lunesta prescribing information](#)
- [Eszopiclone \(AHFS Monograph\)](#)

Related treatment guides

- [Insomnia](#)

Further information

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

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DRUG STATUS

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 Risk data available

CSA Schedule*

4 Some potential for abuse



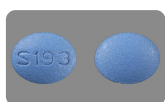
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