



[Home](#)

2. Atomoxetine

Atomoxetine

Pronunciation: *AT-oh-mox-e-teen*

Generic name: atomoxetine

Brand name: [Strattera](#)

Dosage form: capsule (10mg, 18mg, 25mg, 40mg, 60mg, 80mg, 100 mg)

Drug class: [Adrenergic uptake inhibitors for ADHD](#)

Medically reviewed by [Melisa Puckey, BPharm](#). Last updated on Mar 27, 2024.

[Uses](#) [Side effects](#) [Warnings](#) [Before taking](#) [Dosage](#) [Interactions](#) [FAQ](#)

What is Atomoxetine?

Atomoxetine is an SNRI medicine used to treat [attention deficit hyperactivity disorder](#) (ADHD) to help improve attention and reduce hyperactivity and impulsiveness. Atomoxetine is thought to work by selectively blocking a protein (pre-synaptic norepinephrine transporter) that affects chemicals in the brain and nerves involved in hyperactivity and impulse control; blocking this protein may improve ADHD symptoms. Atomoxetine is usually used together with psychological, educational, and social measures.

Atomoxetine is not a stimulant medication and is not a controlled substance.

Atomoxetine is from a group of medicines called selective norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors (SNRI). [Strattera](#), the original brand of atomoxetine, received FDA approval on November 26, 2002, for the treatment of Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder. Atomoxetine has not been studied in children less than 6 years old. Strattera is now available as a generic under the active ingredient name atomoxetine.

Atomoxetine side effects

Common atomoxetine side effects

Common atomoxetine side effects may include nausea, vomiting, [upset stomach](#), [constipation](#), dry mouth, loss of appetite, mood changes, feeling tired, dizziness, urination problems, or impotence, which is trouble having an erection.

Serious atomoxetine side effects

Get emergency medical help if you have signs of an allergic reaction, such as hives, difficulty breathing, or swelling of your face, lips, tongue, or throat.

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

This medicine can affect children's growth. Tell your doctor if your child is not growing at a normal rate while using this medicine.

Other serious atomoxetine side effects. Call your doctor at once if you have:

- signs of heart problems - chest pain, trouble breathing, feeling like you might pass out;
- signs of psychosis - hallucinations (seeing or hearing things that are not real), new behavior problems, aggression, hostility, paranoia;
- liver problems - stomach pain (upper right side), itching, flu-like symptoms, dark urine, jaundice (yellowing of the skin or eyes);
- painful or difficult urination; or
- erection is painful or lasts longer than 4 hours (this is a rare side effect).

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.

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

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Warnings

You should not use this medicine if you have [narrow-angle glaucoma](#), an adrenal gland tumor, heart disease, coronary artery disease, or moderate to severe high blood pressure.

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

Atomoxetine may cause new or worsening psychosis (unusual thoughts or behavior), especially if you have a history of depression, mental illness, or [bipolar disorder](#).

Atomoxetine has caused stroke, heart attack, and sudden death in people with high blood pressure, heart disease, or a heart defect.

Some young people have thoughts about suicide when they first start taking this medicine, or whenever the dose is changed. Stay alert to changes in your mood or symptoms, especially if you have ever had suicidal thoughts.

Before taking this medicine

Do not use this medicine 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.

You should not use this medicine if you are allergic to the active ingredient atomoxetine, any of the inactive ingredients, or if you have:

- severe heart or blood vessel problems;
- narrow-angle glaucoma; or
- [pheochromocytoma](#) (tumor of the adrenal gland).

This medicine has caused stroke, heart attack, and sudden death in certain people. Tell your doctor if you have:

- heart problems or a congenital heart defect;
- [high blood pressure](#); or
- a family history of [heart disease](#) or sudden death.

To make sure this medicine is safe for you, tell your doctor if you or anyone in your family has ever had:

- depression, mental illness, bipolar disorder, psychosis;
- suicidal thoughts or actions;
- low blood pressure; or

- liver disease.

Some young people have thoughts about suicide when first taking this medicine, or whenever the dose is changed. Your doctor will need to check your progress at regular visits. Your family or other caregivers should also be alert to changes in your mood or symptoms.

Pregnancy

It is not known whether atomoxetine will harm an unborn baby. Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant before taking this medicine. If you are pregnant, your name may be listed on a pregnancy registry to track the effects of the active ingredient atomoxetine on the baby.

Breastfeeding

It may not be safe to breastfeed while using atomoxetine. Ask your doctor about any risks.

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

How should I take atomoxetine?

Take atomoxetine exactly as prescribed by your doctor. Follow all directions on your prescription label. Your doctor may occasionally change your dose. Do not use this medicine in larger or smaller amounts or for longer than recommended.

Take the medicine at the same time each day, with a full glass of water.

Atomoxetine is usually taken once daily in the morning or two times per day in the morning and late afternoon. Follow your doctor's instructions.

You may take this medicine with or without food.

Do not crush, chew, break, or open a capsule. Swallow the capsule whole. Tell your doctor if you have trouble swallowing the capsules.

Use atomoxetine regularly to get the most benefit. Get your prescription refilled before you run out of medicine completely.

Do not use a capsule that has been opened or accidentally broken. The medicine from inside the capsule can be dangerous if it gets in your eyes. If this occurs, rinse your eyes with water. Ask your doctor or pharmacist how to safely handle and dispose of a broken capsule.

While taking atomoxetine, your doctor will need to check your progress at regular visits. Your heart rate, blood pressure, height, and weight may also need to be checked often.

Atomoxetine Dosing information

Usual Adult Atomoxetine Dose for Attention Deficit Disorder

Initial Dose: 40 mg/day orally.

Maintenance Dose: Increase dose to 80 mg/day orally after a minimum of 3 days at the initial dose.

Maximum Dose: After 2 to 4 additional weeks, the dose may be increased up to 100 mg/day in patients who have not achieved an optimal response.

Comments: Take a dose once a day in the morning OR as evenly divided doses in the morning and late afternoon/early evening.

Usual Pediatric Atomoxetine Dose for Attention Deficit Disorder

70 kg or Less:

Initial Dose: 0.5 mg/kg/day orally.

Maintenance dose: Increase dose to 1.2 mg/kg/day after a minimum of 3 days at the initial dose.

Maximum dose: 1.4 mg/kg/day or 100 mg/day, whichever is less.

Over 70 kg:

Initial Dose: 40 mg/day orally.

Maintenance dose: Increase dose to 80 mg/day after a minimum of 3 days at the initial dose.

Maximum dose: After 2 to 4 additional weeks, the dose may be increased up to 100 mg/day in patients who have not achieved an optimal response.

Comments: Take a dose once a day in the morning OR as evenly divided doses in the morning and late afternoon/early evening.

Note: Dosing adjustment may be required in patients with hepatic impairment, strong CYP2D6 Inhibitors, and patients who are known to be CYP2D6-poor metabolizers.

For more detailed Strattera dosing information, click on the link below.

 [Detailed Atomoxetine dosage information](#)

What happens if I miss a dose?

Take the missed dose as soon as you remember. Skip the missed dose if it is almost time for your next scheduled dose. Do not take extra medicine to make up for the missed dose.

What happens if I overdose?

Seek emergency medical attention or call the Poison Help line at 1-800-222-1222.

Overdose symptoms may include drowsiness, dizziness, stomach problems, tremors, or unusual behavior.

What to avoid

Avoid using or handling an open or broken capsule. If the powder from inside the capsule gets in your eyes, rinse them with water right away and call your doctor.

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

What other drugs will affect atomoxetine?

Tell your doctor about all your current medicines and any you start or stop using, especially:

- an antidepressant;

- asthma medication;
- blood pressure medicine; or
- a cold or allergy medicine that contains a decongestant such as pseudoephedrine or phenylephrine.

This list is not complete. Other drugs, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal products, may interact with atomoxetine. Not all possible interactions are listed in this medication guide.

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

Does atomoxetine interact with my other drugs?

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

atomoxetine

+

Enter a drug name

Add

Storage

Store in a safe place at room temperature, 59 to 86°F (15 to 30°C).

Company

Marketed by: Lilly USA, LLC Indianapolis, IN 46285, USA

Popular FAQ

Qelbree vs. Strattera: How do they compare?



References

1. [Strattera Package Insert FDA](#)

More about atomoxetine

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Other brands

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Further information

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

[Medical Disclaimer](#)

DRUG STATUS

Availability

Rx Prescription only

[Pregnancy & Lactation](#)

 Risk data available

CSA Schedule*

N/A Not a controlled drug

Approval History



User Reviews & Ratings

5.4 / 10

[649 Reviews](#)

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