



# Quetiapine

*What you should know about taking quetiapine (Seroquel)*

Quetiapine is also known by the brand name Seroquel.

Quetiapine is an atypical antipsychotic that acts on the adrenergic, serotonergic, and dopaminergic systems among others.

Quetiapine is used to treat psychosis, schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, and bipolar disorder, especially the manic phase. It can help also help with anxiety, sleeping, and to enhance the effect of antidepressants.

## What should my health care provider know before I take this medication?

Alert your provider if you are taking any other medication or if you are pregnant, breastfeeding, or plan to become pregnant. Please tell your provider if you have a seizure disorder, heart disease, or liver disease. Also, alert them if you've had a stroke in the past.

## How do I take it?

Take this medication exactly as your provider prescribes. It is fine to take this medication with or without food.

## What are the possible side effects?

Feeling dizzy when you sit up or stand quickly is a possible side effect. This may happen the first 3 to 5 days you take the medicine or when your dosage is increased. Getting up slowly may help.

Feeling drowsy, headache, constipation, dry mouth, upset stomach and weight gain are possible side effects as well.

Avoid long exposure to the sun, heavy exercise, high temperatures and dehydration. Quetiapine could interfere with your body's ability to cool down.

If taken for years, there is a very small risk of developing tardive dyskinesia (a permanent disorder of uncontrolled movement involving twitching of the face, body, tongue or jaw).

Other serious yet rare side effects include seizures, tremors, feeling that you need to be moving constantly, muscle spasms and neuroleptic malignant syndrome (a temporary but serious disorder of muscle contractions linked with high fever and abnormal vital signs).

## Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or health care provider if you have questions or concerns. UWMC Clinic staff is also available to help at any time.

UW Outpatient  
Psychiatry Clinic  
206-598-7792

After hours or on the weekend call the UW Psychiatry resident on-call at 206-598-6190

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## When will it start working?

You may start to notice subtle improvement in your symptoms right away. The full effect of the medication will not be realized until you have taken a steady dose for weeks.

## What should I do if I miss a dose?

You should take it as soon as you remember unless it is within 2 hours of the next scheduled dose. In that case, skip the missed dose and take the next one as directed. Do not take double doses.

## When should I call my provider?

Call your provider, get emergency medical care, or call 911 if you:

- Feel suicidal or homicidal.
- Have an allergic reaction to your medication (hives, itching, rash, trouble breathing, tightness in chest, swelling of your lips, tongue, or throat).
- Have had a seizure.
- Have involuntary movements (facial or body twitching that you cannot control).
- Feel dizzy when you stand or sit up quickly and getting up slowly does not relieve the feeling.
- Have high fever and muscle stiffness.

## Where can I learn more about quetiapine?

- [www.seroquel.com](http://www.seroquel.com)
- Ask your pharmacist or healthcare provider.

References: Micromedex, and *Handbook of Psychiatric Drug Therapy*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition by Arana and Rosenbaum.

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