



Paroxetine

What you should know about taking paroxetine (Paxil)

Paroxetine is also known by the brand names Paxil and Paxil CR.

Paroxetine is a selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor (SSRI).

Paroxetine is used to treat depression, anxiety, panic, obsessive-compulsive disorder, and post-traumatic stress disorder.

Please contact your provider right away if you are having thoughts of suicide.

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. Tell your provider if you've ever had bipolar disorder or a manic episode. Also, tell your doctor if you have liver or kidney disease.

How do I take it?

Take this medication exactly as your provider prescribes. It is fine to take this medication with or without food. Do not crush or chew the Paxil CR form. Do not stop taking this medicine without your provider's approval. You may need to reduce your dosage slowly to avoid withdrawal symptoms.

What are the possible side effects?

Paroxetine has some side effects that are common only in the first several weeks of starting the medication, until your body adjusts to the medicine. These side effects are likely temporary:

- Feeling nervous.
- Nausea.
- Vomiting.
- Excess gas.
- Diarrhea.
- Insomnia (trouble sleeping).
- Tremor.
- Yawning.
- Sweating.
- Feeling dizzy or drowsy.

Questions?

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

Outpatient Psychiatry
Clinic:
206-598-7792

After hours or on the weekend, call the UWMC Psychiatry Resident on-call:
206-598-6190

Other possible side effects of paroxetine are more long term: decreased appetite, constipation, blurred vision, difficulty urinating, dry mouth, or sexual problems. Some symptoms linked with paroxetine are more serious, but are very rare: suicidal thoughts, mania, low blood sodium levels, abnormal bleeding, or seizure.

When will it start working?

You may start to notice subtle improvement in your symptoms in 2 to 4 weeks, although complete impact of the drug may not be felt for 4 to 8 weeks.

What should I do if I miss a dose?

You should take it as soon as you remember unless it is almost time for 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 are feeling suicidal.
- You are having an allergic reaction to your medication (hives, itching, rash, trouble breathing, tightness in chest, or swelling of your lips, tongue, or throat).
- You have had a seizure.
- You are having serious side effects to your medication.

Where can I learn more about paroxetine?

- www.paxil.com
- Ask your pharmacist or provider.

References: *Micromedex* and *Handbook of Psychiatric Drug Therapy* 4th Edition by Arana and Rosenbaum.

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