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## Sertraline: Patient drug information Lexicomp®

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(For additional information [see "Sertraline: Drug information"](#) and [see "Sertraline: Pediatric drug information"](#))

**Brand Names: US** Zoloft

**Brand Names: Canada** Zoloft

### Warning

- Drugs like this one have raised the chance of suicidal thoughts or actions in children and young adults. The risk may be greater in people who have had these thoughts or actions in the past. All people who take this drug need to be watched closely. Call the doctor right away if signs like low mood (depression), nervousness, restlessness, grouchiness, panic attacks, or changes in mood or actions are new or worse. Call the doctor right away if any thoughts or actions of suicide occur.

### What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat low mood (depression).
- It is used to treat obsessive-compulsive problems.
- It is used to treat panic attacks.
- It is used to treat post-traumatic stress.
- It is used to treat mood problems caused by monthly periods.
- It is used to treat social anxiety problems.
- It may be given to you for other reasons. Talk with the doctor.

### What do I need to tell my doctor BEFORE I take this drug?

**All products:**

- If you have an allergy to sertraline or any other part of this drug.
- If you are allergic to any drugs like this one, any other drugs, foods, or other substances. Tell your doctor about the allergy and what signs you had, like rash; hives; itching; shortness of breath; wheezing; cough;

swelling of face, lips, tongue, or throat; or any other signs.

- If you have liver disease.
- If you are taking any of these drugs: Linezolid or methylene blue.
- If you are taking pimozone.
- If you have taken certain drugs used for low mood (depression) like isocarboxazid, phenelzine, or tranylcypromine or drugs used for Parkinson's disease like selegiline or rasagiline in the last 14 days. Taking this drug within 14 days of those drugs can cause very bad high blood pressure.
- If you are taking any drugs that can cause a certain type of heartbeat that is not normal (prolonged QT interval). There are many drugs that can do this. Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure.

**Liquid:**

- If you have a latex allergy. The dropper has rubber.
- If you are taking disulfiram.
- If you are pregnant or may be pregnant. Do not take this form of this drug if you are pregnant.

This is not a list of all drugs or health problems that interact with this drug.

Tell your doctor and pharmacist about all of your drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins) and health problems. You must check to make sure that it is safe for you to take this drug with all of your drugs and health problems. Do not start, stop, or change the dose of any drug without checking with your doctor.

## **What are some things I need to know or do while I take this drug?**

**All products:**

- Tell all of your health care providers that you take this drug. This includes your doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- Avoid driving and doing other tasks or actions that call for you to be alert until you see how this drug affects you.
- Avoid drinking alcohol while taking this drug.
- Talk with your doctor before you use other drugs and natural products that slow your actions.
- This drug may raise the chance of a broken bone. Talk with the doctor.
- This drug may raise the chance of bleeding. Sometimes, bleeding can be life-threatening. Talk with the doctor.
- This drug can cause low sodium levels. Very low sodium levels can be life-threatening, leading to seizures, passing out, trouble breathing, or death. Talk with the doctor.
- A type of abnormal heartbeat (prolonged QT interval) has happened with this drug. Sometimes, this has led to another type of unsafe abnormal heartbeat (torsades de pointes). Call your doctor right away if you have a fast or abnormal heartbeat, or if you pass out.
- Some people may have a higher chance of eye problems with this drug. Your doctor may want you to have an eye exam to see if you have a higher chance of these eye problems. Call your doctor right away if you have eye pain, change in eyesight, or swelling or redness in or around the eye.
- A very bad and sometimes deadly health problem called serotonin syndrome may happen. The risk may be greater if you take this drug with drugs for depression, migraines, or certain other drugs. Call your doctor right away if you have agitation; change in balance; confusion; hallucinations; fever; fast or

abnormal heartbeat; flushing; muscle twitching or stiffness; seizures; shivering or shaking; sweating a lot; very bad diarrhea, upset stomach, or throwing up; or very bad headache.

- This drug may affect certain lab tests. Tell all of your health care providers and lab workers that you take this drug.
- If you are 65 or older, use this drug with care. You could have more side effects.
- This drug is not approved for use in all children. Talk with the doctor to be sure that this drug is right for your child.
- Use with care in children. Talk with the doctor.
- This drug may affect growth in children and teens in some cases. They may need regular growth checks. Talk with the doctor.
- Taking this drug late in pregnancy may raise the chance of breathing or feeding problems, low body temperature, or withdrawal symptoms in the newborn. Talk with the doctor.
- Tell your doctor if you are breast-feeding. You will need to talk about any risks to your baby.

#### **Tablets and capsules:**

- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or plan on getting pregnant. You will need to talk about the benefits and risks of using this drug while you are pregnant.

## **What are some side effects that I need to call my doctor about right away?**

**WARNING/CAUTION:** Even though it may be rare, some people may have very bad and sometimes deadly side effects when taking a drug. Tell your doctor or get medical help right away if you have any of the following signs or symptoms that may be related to a very bad side effect:

- Signs of an allergic reaction, like rash; hives; itching; red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin with or without fever; wheezing; tightness in the chest or throat; trouble breathing, swallowing, or talking; unusual hoarseness; or swelling of the mouth, face, lips, tongue, or throat.
- Signs of low sodium levels like headache, trouble focusing, memory problems, feeling confused, weakness, seizures, or change in balance.
- Signs of bleeding like throwing up blood or throw up that looks like coffee grounds; coughing up blood; blood in the urine; black, red, or tarry stools; bleeding from the gums; vaginal bleeding that is not normal; bruises without a reason or that get bigger; or any bleeding that is very bad or that you cannot stop.
- Seizures.
- Chest pain or pressure.
- Not able to control bladder.
- Very bad headache.
- A big weight gain or loss.
- Sex problems like lowered interest in sex or ejaculation problems.
- For females, menstrual changes. These include lots of bleeding, spotting, or bleeding between cycles
- A very bad skin reaction (Stevens-Johnson syndrome/toxic epidermal necrolysis) may happen. It can cause very bad health problems that may not go away, and sometimes death. Get medical help right away if you have signs like red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin (with or without fever); red or irritated eyes; or sores in your mouth, throat, nose, or eyes.
- Very bad and sometimes deadly liver problems have happened with this drug. Call your doctor right away if you have signs of liver problems like dark urine, feeling tired, not hungry, upset stomach or stomach

pain, light-colored stools, throwing up, or yellow skin or eyes.

## What are some other side effects of this drug?

All drugs may cause side effects. However, many people have no side effects or only have minor side effects. Call your doctor or get medical help if any of these side effects or any other side effects bother you or do not go away:

- Dizziness.
- Feeling sleepy.
- Feeling tired or weak.
- Feeling nervous and excitable.
- Upset stomach.
- Loose stools (diarrhea).
- Dry mouth.
- Hard stools (constipation).
- Not able to sleep.
- Sweating a lot.
- Shakiness.
- Not hungry.
- Belly pain.

These are not all of the side effects that may occur. If you have questions about side effects, call your doctor. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You may report side effects to your national health agency.

## How is this drug best taken?

Use this drug as ordered by your doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

### **Tablets:**

- Take with or without food.

### **Capsules:**

- Take this drug with food.

### **Liquid:**

- Only use the measuring device that comes with this liquid drug.
- Mix liquid with  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of water, ginger ale, lemon-lime soda, lemonade, or orange juice.
- After mixing, take your dose right away. Do not store for future use.
- This drug may look hazy after mixing. This is normal.

### **All products:**

- This drug may affect how much of some other drugs are in your body. If you are taking other drugs, talk with your doctor. You may need to have your blood work checked more closely while taking this drug with your other drugs.
- To gain the most benefit, do not miss doses.

- Do not stop taking this drug all of a sudden without calling your doctor. You may have a greater risk of side effects. If you need to stop this drug, you will want to slowly stop it as ordered by your doctor.
- Keep taking this drug as you have been told by your doctor or other health care provider, even if you feel well.
- In depression, sleep and appetite may get better soon after starting this drug. Other low mood signs may take up to 4 weeks to get better.

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

- Take a missed dose as soon as you think about it.
- If it is close to the time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your normal time.
- Do not take 2 doses at the same time or extra doses.

## **How do I store and/or throw out this drug?**

- Store at room temperature.
- Keep lid tightly closed.
- Store in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.
- Keep all drugs in a safe place. Keep all drugs out of the reach of children and pets.
- Throw away unused or expired drugs. Do not flush down a toilet or pour down a drain unless you are told to do so. Check with your pharmacist if you have questions about the best way to throw out drugs. There may be drug take-back programs in your area.

## **General drug facts**

- If your symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your doctor.
- Do not share your drugs with others and do not take anyone else's drugs.
- Keep a list of all your drugs (prescription, natural products, vitamins, OTC) with you. Give this list to your doctor.
- Talk with the doctor before starting any new drug, including prescription or OTC, natural products, or vitamins.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.
- If you think there has been an overdose, call your poison control center or get medical care right away. Be ready to tell or show what was taken, how much, and when it happened.

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