



## Celexa (Citalopram)

**Citalopram** is an antidepressant drug used to treat depression associated with mood disorders. It is also used on occasion in the treatment of body dysmorphic disorder and anxiety. Your ENT doctor may try it as treatment for a migraine prevention, specifically for people with unusually symptoms of dizziness, noise distortion, ear pain and pressure, facial pain and pressure and burning sensations. While on its own Citalopram is less effective than amitriptyline in the prevention of migraines, in refractory cases combination therapy may be more effective.

Citalopram belongs to a class of drugs known as selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs). It affects the messengers, or neurotransmitters, that allow one set of nerves to activate the next set. Migraine conditions, which are best known to cause headaches, can also affect a number of other specialized nerves. Serotonin is a common neurotransmitter.

Citalopram was originally sold under the name Celexa, but its patent expired in 2003, allowing other companies to legally produce generic versions.

Lundbeck has recently released an updated formulation called escitalopram (also known as **Cipralex** or **Lexapro**).

### Dosing

Usually start at 10 or 20 mg daily.

Take each dose with a full glass of water.

Try to take the medicine at the same time each day.

Since citalopram can sometimes cause fatigue, it is recommended to take at bedtime.

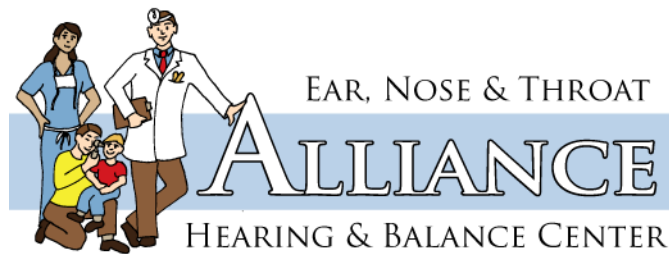


*The smaller brown tablet is 20 mg. The larger white tablet is 40 mg.*

It may take 4 weeks or longer before you start feeling better.

Do not stop using Lexapro without first talking to your doctor. You may have unpleasant side effects if you stop taking this medication suddenly. Taper off citalopram in order to diminish withdrawal symptoms. Symptoms of withdrawal include dizziness, tingling sensations, tiredness, vivid dreams, and irritability or poor mood.

Citalopram is generally considered safe and well-tolerated when used at levels below 60 mg/day. Its minimal drug interaction makes it a better choice for patients on many medicines.



## What happens if I miss a dose?

Take the missed dose as soon as you remember. However, if it is almost time for the next regularly scheduled dose, skip the missed dose and take the next one as directed. Do not take extra medicine to make up the missed dose.

## Side effects

Over 10% of patients reported one or more of the following side effects: fatigue, drowsiness, dry mouth, increased sweating, trembling, headache, dizziness, sleep disturbances, insomnia, cardiac arrhythmia, blood pressure changes, nausea and/or vomiting, diarrhea, reduced sexual pleasure in females, impotence and ejaculatory problems in males.

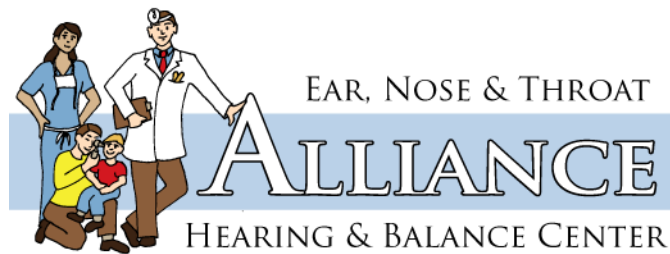
In rare cases (around 1% of cases), some allergic reactions, convulsions, mood changes, anxiety and confusion have been reported.

## Drug interactions

- **MAO inhibitors.** All SSRIs, including citalopram, should not be taken with any of the mono-amine oxidase (MAO) inhibitor-class of antidepressants, for example, isocarboxazid (Marplan), rasagiline (Azilect), phenelzine (Nardil), tranylcypromine (Parnate), selegiline (Eldepryl), and procarbazine (Matulane). Such combinations may lead to confusion, high blood pressure, tremor, and hyperactivity.
- **St John's wort.** Citalopram should be taken with caution when using St John's wort.
- **tryptophan.** This common dietary supplement can cause headaches, nausea, sweating, and dizziness when taken with any SSRI.
- **aspirin, nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs** or other blood thinners, such as warfarin (**Coumadin**). Talk to your doctor before taking any medicine for pain, arthritis, fever, or swelling. This includes aspirin, ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin), naproxen (Aleve, Naprosyn), diclofenac (Voltaren), indomethacin, piroxicam (Feldene), nabumetone (Relafen), etodolac (Lodine), and others. Taking any of these drugs with Lexapro may cause you to bruise or bleed easily.
- **carbamazepine** (Carbatrol, Tegretol)
- **cimetidine** (Tagamet)
- **lithium** (Lithobid, Eskalith)
- **antidepressants** such as amitriptyline (Elavil), fluoxetine (Prozac, Sarafem), fluvoxamine (Luvox), imipramine (Tofranil), nortriptyline (Pamelor), paroxetine (Paxil), or sertraline (Zoloft)
- **triptans.** almotriptan (Axert), frovatriptan (Frova), sumatriptan (Imitrex), naratriptan (Amerge), rizatriptan (Maxalt), or zolmitriptan (Zomig).

If you are using any of these drugs, you may not be able to use Lexapro, or you may need dosage adjustments or special tests during treatment.

**Pregnancy:** Exposure of neonates to citalopram in the third trimester may cause complications.



**Nursing mother:** Citalopram is excreted in breast milk. Breastfeeding by a citalopram treated woman may cause adverse effects in the infant.

## **Lexapro (escitalopram)**

This medicine is nearly identical to citalopram, except dosing and cost. Follow the guidelines for that medication.

### **Dosing**

10 mg once daily.

It is dangerous to try and purchase Lexapro on the Internet or from vendors outside of the United States. Medications distributed from Internet sales may contain dangerous ingredients, or may not be distributed by a licensed pharmacy. Samples of Lexapro purchased on the Internet have been found to contain haloperidol (Haldol), a potent antipsychotic drug with dangerous side effects. For more information, contact the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) or visit [www.fda.gov/buyonlineguide](http://www.fda.gov/buyonlineguide).