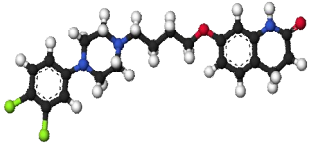


## Aripiprazole (pronounced 'arry-pip-ra-zole)



### What is aripiprazole?

Aripiprazole (also known as Abilify<sup>®</sup>) is mainly used to help treat the symptoms of psychosis, schizophrenia and mania. It can also be used to help bipolar depression, depression (with antidepressants) and in a crisis. Aripiprazole is made as tablets, melt-in-the-mouth tablets, an injection and a syrup.

### What does aripiprazole help?

Aripiprazole can help many symptoms. These can include psychosis (losing touch with reality) which can include hallucinations (seeing or hearing things that aren't there) and delusions (thinking something is true when it isn't). Aripiprazole can also help mood and other symptoms.

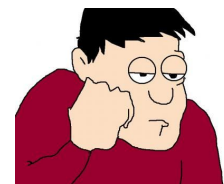


### How and when should I take aripiprazole?

Swallow the tablets with at least half a glass of water whilst sitting or standing. This is to make sure that they reach the stomach and do not stick in your throat. For the liquid, use a medicine spoon, dropper or oral syringe. For the melt-in-the-mouth tablets, just put them on your tongue and they will dissolve quickly. Taking it at mealtimes may make it easier for you to remember as there is no problem about taking aripiprazole with or after food. If the label says to take it once a day this is usually best at bedtime as it may make you drowsy at first.

### How long will I have to wait before it works?

This will depend on what you are taking it for but the effect usually starts in a week or so, and builds over several weeks.

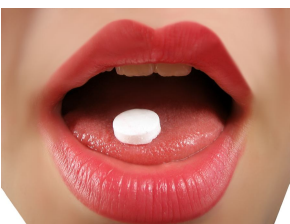


### How long will I need to keep taking aripiprazole for?

This will depend on what you are taking it for. It may be for several months or years.

### Can I stop taking aripiprazole suddenly?

It is better not to do this without talking it over first with other people e.g. relatives or your doctor, nurse or pharmacist. Things normally work out much better if you stop medication in a planned way. Your symptoms can return if treatment is stopped too early. This may occur some weeks or even months after aripiprazole has been stopped. When the time comes, you should withdraw aripiprazole by a gradual reduction in the dose over several weeks.



### What should I do if I forget to take a dose of aripiprazole?

Take the missed dose as soon as you remember unless it is within about 8-12 hours of your next dose. If you remember after this just take the next dose as normal. Do not try to catch up by taking two doses at once as you may get more side-effects.









### Can I cycle, drive or operate a boat while I am taking aripiprazole?

You may feel a bit light-headed at first when taking aripiprazole. Until this wears off, or you know how aripiprazole affects you, be careful cycling and, if you are old enough, do not drive or operate machinery.



**What sort of side-effects might I get with aripiprazole?**

The table below will show you some of the main side effects you might get from aripiprazole, and what you can do about them. The more common ones are near the top of the list.

	<p><b>Restlessness (known as "akathisia").</b> Feeling more on edge. You feel happier when moving around. This happens much more at the start of treatment but usually wears off in a few weeks. Your doctor may be able to give you something to help this. Try and relax by taking deep breaths. Wear loose fitting clothes.</p>		<p><b>Constipation.</b> When you want to poop but can't (the opposite of diarrhoea). Make sure you eat enough fibre, cereals or fruit. Make sure you drink enough fluid. If this does not help, ask your doctor or pharmacist for a mild laxative.</p>
	<p><b>Stomach upset.</b> This includes feeling and being sick and getting diarrhoea. If it's mild, see your pharmacist. If it lasts for more than a day or two, see your doctor.</p>		<p><b>Not being able to get to sleep at night.</b> This can be a problem. Let your doctor know. He or she may be able to change your dose. Make sure you take the dose early in the day.</p>
	<p><b>Headache.</b> If your head is painful, paracetamol usually helps.</p>		<p><b>Blurred vision.</b> Things look fuzzy and you can't focus your eyes properly. Don't drive. See your doctor if you are worried.</p>
	<p><b>Movement disorders (extra-pyramidal side effects).</b> Having shaky hands or stiff muscles. Your eyes and tongue may move on their own. It is not usually dangerous but is a well known side effect. If it is distressing or worries you, tell your doctor. He or she may be able to give you a medicine for it.</p>		<p><b>Feeling dizzy, light-headed or faint, especially when you stand up.</b> Do not stand up too quickly. Try and lie down when you feel it coming on. Do not cycle or drive.</p>

Do not be worried by this list of side effects. Some people get no side effects at all and others may get some effects that are not listed in this table. If you think you might have a side effect to your medicine, you should ask your doctor, nurse or pharmacist. If you want to know more, go to our website for links to other websites with more information.

**The small print:** This leaflet is to help you understand about your medicine. You should also read the manufacturer's Patient Information Leaflet (PIL). You may find lots more on the internet but beware as internet-based information is not always accurate. Do not share medicines with anyone else. Go to our website for fuller answers to these and many other questions e.g. driving, women's health, how it works, doses and interactions, and about the conditions. The "Handy charts" will help you compare the main medicines for each condition, how they work and their side effects.