

Sulpiride (pron. sull-pea-ride)

What is sulpiride used for?

Sulpiride (also known as Dolmatil[®] and others) is mainly used to help treat the symptoms of psychosis, schizophrenia and mania and to help stop the symptoms coming back. It can also be used to help ADHD, dementia and behavioural disorders. It is known as a 'neuroleptic' or 'antipsychotic'. Sulpiride is made as tablets and a syrup.

What is the usual dose of sulpiride?

The usual dose of sulpiride around 200mg to 2000mg a day.

How should I take sulpiride?

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 or oral syringe. Use it carefully to make sure you measure the correct amount.

When should I take sulpiride?

Take your sulpiride as directed on the medicine label. Try to take it at regular times each day. Taking it at mealtimes may make it easier for you to remember as there is no problem about taking sulpiride with or after food. If the instructions say to take them once a day this is usually best at bedtime as sulpiride may make you drowsy at first.

What are the alternatives to sulpiride?

There are many other antipsychotics, talking therapies and treatments for psychosis, schizophrenia, mania and other symptoms. See our "Handy charts" to help you compare the medicines, how they work and their side effects.

How long will sulpiride take to work?

This will depend on what you are taking it for. It can start in a few days and the effect builds over the next few weeks. Please look at the "Handy charts" for more help and advice.

How long will I need to keep taking sulpiride for?

This will depend on what you are taking it for and how well you are doing. Please look at one of the "Handy charts" for more help and advice.

Is sulpiride addictive?

Sulpiride are not addictive. If you have taken them for a long time you may get some mild effects if you stop them suddenly.

Can I stop taking sulpiride suddenly?

It is unwise to stop taking it suddenly, even if you feel better. Your symptoms can return if treatment is stopped too early. This may occur some weeks or even many months after sulpiride has been stopped. When the time comes, you should stop sulpiride by a gradual reduction in the dose taken over a period of several weeks. You should discuss this fully with your doctor.

What should I do if I forget to take sulpiride?

Take the missed dose as soon as you remember unless it is within about 4-6 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. If you have problems remembering your doses (as very many people do) ask your pharmacist, doctor or nurse about this. There are some special packs that can be used to help you remember.

Will sulpiride affect my other medication?

Sulpiride has only a few interactions with other medicines.

- The effect of sulpiride can be decreased by sucralfate or indigestion treatments with aluminium in them
- If sulpiride is taken with benzodiazepines (e.g. diazepam, lorazepam, temazepam) or alcohol, it may cause more sleepiness.
- You should have no problems with "The Contraceptive Pill" and sulpiride

Not all of these interactions happen in everyone. Some of these medicines can still be used together but you will need to follow your doctor's instructions carefully. There are many other possible drug interactions.

Can I drink alcohol while I am taking sulpiride?

If you drink alcohol while taking sulpiride it may make you feel more sleepy. This is particularly important if you need to drive or operate machinery. You must seek advice on this.

What sort of side-effects might occur if I am taking sulpiride?

The table below will show you some of the main side effects you might get from sulpiride.

Side effect	What happens	What to do about it
COMMON (<i>more than about 1 in 10 people might get these</i>)		
Sleepiness	Feeling sleepy or sluggish. It can last for a few hours after taking a dose.	Don't drive or use machinery. Ask your doctor if you can take sulpiride at a different time.
Movement disorders (extra-pyramidal side effects)	Having shaky hands. Your eyes and tongue may move on their own. You may feel very restless, or stiff.	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 e.g. an anticholinergic.
LESS COMMON (<i>less than about 1 in 10 people might get these</i>)		
Postural hypotension	Low blood pressure - this can make you feel dizzy.	Try not to stand up too quickly. If you feel dizzy, don't drive.
Headache	When your head is painful.	Try paracetamol. Your pharmacist will be able to advise if this is safe to take with any other medicines you may be taking.
Akathisia	Feeling more on edge and restless. You may sweat a lot more.	Try and relax by taking deep breaths. Wear loose fitting clothes.
Raised prolactin (hyperprolactinaemia)	It can affect breasts (including milk being leaked) and irregular or no periods in women, or cause impotence and chest changes in men.	It can be very distressing. Discuss with your doctor when you next see him or her as it may possibly even affect your bones if prolactin is raised for a long time.
Constipation	When you want to poop but can't (the opposite of diarrhoea). You can't pass a motion.	Make sure you eat enough fibre, cereal or fruit. Make sure you are drinking enough fluid, keep active and get some exercise e.g. walking. Ask your pharmacist for a mild laxative.
UNCOMMON (<i>less than about 1 in 100 people might get these</i>)		
Blurred vision	Things look fuzzy and you can't focus your eyes properly.	Don't drive. See your doctor if you are worried.
Weight gain	Eating more and putting on weight.	A diet full of vegetables and fibre may help prevent weight gain.
Sexual dysfunction	Finding it hard to have an orgasm. No desire for sex.	Discuss with your doctor.
Skin rashes	Blotches on the skin.	Stop taking it and see your doctor now.

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.

Will I need a blood test if I am taking sulpiride?

You might sometimes need to have a blood test to check on some possible side effects e.g. prolactin levels, blood sugar

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

You may feel a bit sleepy at first when taking sulpiride. You should be careful as it may slow down your reaction times. Until this wears off, or you know how sulpiride affects you, do not drive or operate machinery.

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.