

## What are SSRIs and SNRIs?

- SSRIs and SNRIs are types of anti-depressant medication that can also help to relieve pain.
- The way that SSRIs and SNRIs help with pain is not fully understood, but they can be effective when taken with other pain medication. They are particularly useful for chronic pain.
- SSRIs and SNRIs do not help with pain control right away. These medications often take days or weeks to help with pain relief.

### Examples of SSRIs:

- Paroxetine
- Fluoxetine

### Example of SNRI:

- Duloxetine

## How to use and store this medication

- These medications are taken by mouth (tablet, capsule).
- Always follow the directions on the medication label unless your healthcare provider has told you to give the SSRI/SNRI differently.
- Never share your medication with others.
- Store medication at room temperature, away from heat, moisture, and direct light.
- Store the medication out of reach of children and pets.
- If you have unused or expired medication, bring it to a pharmacy. Your pharmacy can dispose of it in a safe way.

## If you miss a dose

- Take the dose as soon as you remember.
- If it is almost time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and continue with the next dose at the regular time.
- Do not take extra medicine to make up for a missed dose.
- If you are unsure what to do about a missed dose, contact your healthcare provider or pharmacist.

## Safety measures

- Do not stop taking this medication suddenly without asking your healthcare provider. They will usually decrease your dose slowly, before stopping.
- SSRIs and SNRIs can interact with other medications. Ask your healthcare provider before taking other medication, including non-prescription medications, vitamins & herbal products.
- If pregnancy or breastfeeding is a consideration, please let your healthcare provider know.

## Side effects

- It is important for you to be aware of possible side effects of SSRIs/SNRIs. Not all side effects happen to all people, and many people do not have any side effects.
- Less serious side effects often improve during the first few days taking the SSRI or SNRI.

These side effects include:

- Dizziness, lightheadedness: try moving slowly when you sit or stand
  - Nausea: try taking medication with a bit of food
  - Diarrhea: this usually goes away after a few weeks
  - Drowsiness: try taking medication near bedtime
  - Difficulty sleeping: try taking medication earlier in the day
  - Nervousness or restlessness: avoid caffeinated drinks
- If these side effects continue, or cause distress, talk with your healthcare provider or pharmacist.

### **CALL YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER RIGHT AWAY AND GET HELP IF**

#### **YOU EXPERIENCE:**

- Seizure
- Unusual bruising
- Unusual sensations, or hallucinations
- Muscle twitches or stiffness
- Thoughts of self-harm/suicide



## For related resources, please see:

- [My Care Path \(by BC Children's Hospital, UBC Department of Pediatrics, Pain BC, and the UBC + BC Children's Hospital Digital Lab\)](#)

A resource for people ages of 12 -17 living with chronic or complex pain. Users can sign up for a free account, and create a pain plan to share with their health care team.

- [Mindfulness resources](#)

From the Kelty Mental Health Resource Centre, this page explains what mindfulness is, and links out to mindfulness resources for children, teens, and families.