Prescribing tips for Citalopram

There is a range of citalopram preparations available, including tablets and oral drops. An up-to-date listing is freely available on the Irish Medicines Board website at [www.imb.ie](http://www.imb.ie).

**Depression: Dosing & Administration**

Full prescribing information is available in the Summary of Product Characteristics (SmPC), which may be accessed freely online at [www.imb.ie](http://www.imb.ie) and [www.medicines.ie](http://www.medicines.ie).

Please consult individual SmPCs for guidance on prescribing for other indications and in special patient populations, e.g. hepatic failure.

**Dosing and administration of citalopram (tablets)**

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Starting Dose</th>
<th>Maximum Daily Dose</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adults (18-65 years)</td>
<td>20 mg daily</td>
<td>40 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elderly (&gt;65 years)</td>
<td>10 mg daily</td>
<td>20 mg</td>
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**Comment:** May be taken at any time of the day with or without food.

**Important Prescribing Information**

**Onset of Action** In clinical practice, an antidepressant effect in an individual is usually seen by 2 weeks. In individuals in whom no antidepressant effect is evident after 3-4 weeks, a change in dose or drug is indicated.

**Duration of Treatment** A single episode of depression should be treated for a minimum of 6 months after recovery. If antidepressant therapy is stopped immediately on recovery, 50% of patients may experience a return of their depressive symptoms.

**QT Interval prolongation**

- Citalopram is contraindicated in patients with known QT interval prolongation or congenital long QT syndrome.
- Citalopram is contraindicated with medicinal products that are known to prolong the QT interval.
- Caution is advised in patients at higher risk of developing Torsade de Pointes, e.g. patients with congestive heart failure, myocardial infarction, bradyarrhythmias or a predisposition to hypokalaemia or hypomagnesaemia.

**Medicines that prolong the QT interval – avoid with citalopram**

- Antihistamines: Astemizole, mizolastine.
- Anti-malarials: Halofantrine, quinine.
- Atypical antipsychotics: Amisulpiride, sertindole.
- Antipsychotics: Pimozide, haloperidol.
- Class IA antiarrhythmics: Flecainide, lidocaine, quinidine.
- Class III antiarrhythmics: Amiodarone, dronedarone, sotalol.
- Tricyclic antidepressants: Amitriptyline, clomipramine, dosulepin, doxepin, imipramine, lofepramine, nortriptyline, trimipramine.
- Quinolone: Moxifloxacin.

This list is not exhaustive and is intended to serve as guidance only. Prescribers should consult appropriate prescribing and drug interaction information for further guidance.

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