

Prescribing tips for Venlafaxine

There is a range of venlafaxine preparations available, including modified-release capsules and immediate-release tablets. An up-to-date listing is freely available on the Irish Medicines Board website at 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 and www.medicines.ie.

Please consult the individual SmPCs for guidance on prescribing for other indications and in special patient populations, e.g. renal impairment.

Dosing and administration of venlafaxine

| Adults (≥18 years) | Starting Dose | Maximum Daily Dose |
|--|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| Modified Release (XL) | 75 mg once daily | 375 mg once daily |
| Immediate-release tablets | 75 mg in 2 divided doses | 375 mg in 2 divided doses |
| Comment Should be taken with food at approximately the same time(s) each day. | | |

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.

Elderly Patients No specific dose adjustments required. However, elderly patients are at increased risk of renal impairment and sensitivity to drug effects. Use the lowest effective dose.

Dose Titration The dose may be increased at intervals of 2 weeks. In some instances, faster dose titration may be necessary. A minimum of 4 days should be allowed between dose increases.

Withdrawal symptoms

- Abrupt discontinuation of venlafaxine should be avoided.
- When stopping treatment, reduce the dose gradually over a period of several weeks (minimum 2 weeks, longer if possible)
- If intolerable symptoms occur on dose reduction or withdrawal, consider restarting venlafaxine at the previously prescribed dose. Subsequent attempts to withdraw venlafaxine should be made at a more gradual rate.