

Nefazodone

Oral tablets / Serzone is a historical brand

An antidepressant reserved for selected situations because of serious liver risk and many medicine interactions.

From Jeffrey Panko, PMHNP-BC's education collection ·

Draft for review · Clinical content has not been revalidated for this website.

Usually taken twice daily

Tablets: 50, 100, 150, 200, 250 mg

U.S. adult depression treatment · Boxed warnings: liver failure and suicidal thoughts/behavior

What it is used for

Treats depression in adults. Other medicines are usually tried first because rare liver injury can be life-threatening.

Some off-label uses include anxiety or PTSD. It is not a routine sleep aid; ask why its benefits outweigh its risks for you.

How it works

Changes serotonin and norepinephrine signaling and blocks some serotonin receptors. No single target explains its benefit.

Sleep or sexual side effects may differ from other antidepressants, but no effect is guaranteed. Standing dizziness can occur.

What to expect over time

FIRST DAYS

Drowsiness, nausea or dizziness may appear early. Report troublesome symptoms; do not change doses yourself.

OVER SEVERAL WEEKS

Mood benefits build gradually. Sleep improvement alone does not show that depression is fully treated.

ONGOING

Review benefit, side effects and new medicines. Liver symptoms need action at any point, not just early on.

Taking your medication

Take your prescribed doses at consistent times, with or without food. Food may help mild nausea; persistent nausea needs review.

Follow the written dose-increase plan. Do not move doses to bedtime or split an unscored tablet without checking first.

Avoid alcohol. Rise slowly, and do not drive or use dangerous equipment until you know how alert and steady you feel.

When to get help

Stop and call now for yellow skin/eyes, dark urine, lost appetite, lasting nausea, belly pain or unusual fatigue: possible liver injury.

Call promptly for worsening mood, suicidal thoughts, severe restlessness or unusually high energy. Call 911 for immediate danger.

Emergency care: fever with agitation/stiffness, fainting, seizures, breathing trouble, or a 4-hour erection (sooner if painful).

Early side effects

Sleepiness, dizziness, dry mouth, constipation, nausea and blurred vision can occur. Report visual trails or persistent problems.

Other effects to discuss

Sexual or weight changes are possible. Feeling emotionally flat deserves review; it does not automatically mean the dose is too high.

What to keep track of

Review mood, standing blood pressure, falls and liver symptoms. Baseline liver tests help assess suitability; repeat tests are individualized. No testing schedule is proven to prevent severe liver injury. Never wait for the next blood test to report symptoms.

Before you start

Tell your team about liver disease, alcohol use, bipolar symptoms, self-harm risk, seizures, heart disease, fainting, glaucoma risk and allergies, including to trazodone. Share every medicine and supplement. Discuss pregnancy or breastfeeding before treatment; this is not approved for children.

Medicines & interactions

MAOIs / serotonin drugs

Do not combine with an MAOI. Usual minimum gaps: 14 days before nefazodone, 7 days after; another drug may require longer. Get a written switch plan.

Medicines to avoid

Carbamazepine, pimozide, simvastatin and lovastatin must not be combined. Other prohibited medicines exist; have a pharmacist check your full list.

Sedatives / alcohol

Avoid alcohol. Triazolam is usually avoided; alprazolam and other sedatives can need major dose changes. Never adjust these medicines yourself.

Other interacting medicines

Buspirone, tacrolimus, cyclosporine and digoxin may need dose or blood-level monitoring. Check pain, migraine, sleep, cold and herbal products first.

Starting or stopping anything

Other antidepressants, tramadol and St. John's wort can raise serotonin-toxicity risk. Changes can alter drug levels; check even nonprescription items.

Everyday tips

Use reminders and keep a current medicine list. Let every prescriber and pharmacist know you take nefazodone.

For mild dry mouth or constipation, try dental care, sugar-free gum, suitable fluids, fiber and activity; report persistent symptoms.

Eye pain with vision change needs urgent care. Report rash, new confusion, weakness or unsteadiness promptly; low sodium is possible.

Keep follow-ups after starting or dose changes. Mood changes can occur at any age; the boxed risk signal includes people through age 24.

Your questions, answered

What if I miss a dose?

The product leaflet says to skip it and resume your usual schedule. Never double doses. Ask for help if doses are often missed.

Can I stop when I feel better?

Use an individualized taper for routine stopping. Possible liver injury is different: stop and seek immediate medical advice, without waiting to taper.

Will normal liver tests protect me?

No. Serious injury cannot be reliably predicted and may appear without clear warning. Do not restart after nefazodone-related liver injury.

Pregnancy or breastfeeding?

Discuss benefits and alternatives promptly. Pregnancy data are limited; the drug enters milk. Better-studied options may suit newborn or preterm feeding.

Storage & safety

Store securely, away from children, heat and moisture; never share. Suspected overdose: call U.S. Poison Help 1-800-222-1222 now. Call 911 for collapse, seizure, trouble breathing, inability to wake, or imminent self-harm.

A final reminder

Does not replace your prescription or Medication Guide.

About this information

For general information only; not a substitute for individualized medical advice. This sheet does not cover every risk or interaction. Ask your prescriber or pharmacist before changing how you take this medication.

Sources

1. <https://dailymed.nlm.nih.gov/dailymed/drugInfo.cfm?setid=51ff7db5-aaf9-4c3c-86e6-958ebf16b60f>
 2. <https://medlineplus.gov/druginfo/meds/a695005.html>
 3. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK501189/>
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Educational inclusion does not mean this medication or its indications are treated at this practice. Review the guide for your exact product with your prescriber or pharmacist.

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Jeffrey Panko, PMHNP-BC