



# Dosulepin

(Pronounced doh-sul-a-pin)

## Why has dosulepin been prescribed?

Dosulepin is an antidepressant. These medications are prescribed to treat depression and anxiety.

## What are the benefits of taking dosulepin?

Antidepressants are effective in reducing the severity of the symptoms of depression. They also shorten the time to recovery and prevent depression returning.

## Are there any precautions with dosulepin?

Dosulepin is suitable for most people. As with all medicines, however, there are precautions. Your prescriber will usually check that it is safe to prescribe dosulepin, but let your prescriber know if any of the following apply to you, as extra care may be needed:

- a) If you have epilepsy, glaucoma, phaeochromocytoma, porphyria or suffer from heart, liver, kidney, thyroid or prostate trouble
- b) If you are taking any other medication especially anticoagulants such as warfarin, medication for Parkinson's disease, medication for schizophrenia, medication for anxiety or insomnia, medication for high blood pressure or irregular heart beat, cimetidine, HIV medications, anticonvulsants, antidepressants or strong pain killers. Also, tell your prescriber if you buy any medicine 'over the counter' from a pharmacy or supermarket. Please also tell your prescriber if you take any alternative or complementary medicine such as Chinese herbal medicines. St John's Wort should not be taken by patients prescribed dosulepin.
- c) If you are pregnant, breast feeding, or wish to become pregnant.
- d) If you have an intolerance to lactose as this is an ingredient of some brands of dosulepin tablets and capsules. It is not an ingredient in tablets or capsules made by the company Sovereign Medical but check with your pharmacist if you have any concerns.

## What is the usual dose of dosulepin?

The starting dose is usually 75mg either in divided doses or as a single dose at night. The dose is then usually slowly increased. The usual dose of dosulepin may be between 100mg and 225mg daily. It may take some time to get to the dose that is most suitable.

## How should dosulepin be taken?

Dosulepin can be taken three times daily or once a day, at night. However, you and your prescriber may decide that it is better for you to take the medicine at another time.

## What form does dosulepin come in?

Dosulepin is available as capsules and tablets. The capsules are available as 25mg and the tablets as 75mg.

## What should be done if a dose is missed?

If you forget a dose, take it as soon as you remember. If you miss a whole day's dose – just carry on as normal with the next dose. If you miss more than a day's dose, speak to your prescriber.

## What will happen when dosulepin is first taken?

Dosulepin, like many medicines, does not work straight away. For example, it may take several days or even weeks for some symptoms to improve. To begin with, some people find that dosulepin may help them feel more calm and relaxed. Later, (usually in two to three weeks) other symptoms should begin to improve. Unfortunately, some people get side effects before starting to feel better. However, most side effects will lessen and should go away after a few weeks. The table below lists some of the side effects associated with dosulepin. There are other possible side effects – we have listed only the most important ones. Ask your doctor, pharmacist or nurse if you are worried about anything else that you think might be a side effect. Further information on side effects is available in the official manufacturer's leaflet.

## Reporting side effects

The 'Yellow Card' scheme encourages patients to report any side effects that they feel may be caused by their medication. Ask your doctor, pharmacist, or nurse for the forms if you wish to report any side effects. Alternatively, telephone 0800 100 3352 or go to [www.mhra.gov.uk](http://www.mhra.gov.uk).

## Is dosulepin addictive?

Dosulepin is not addictive, but if you stop taking the medicine suddenly, you may experience unpleasant physical feelings. Symptoms are fairly common and include nausea, insomnia, diarrhoea, excess salivation and anxiety. Reducing the dose of dosulepin slowly may make these symptoms less severe.

## What about alcohol?

It is recommended that people taking dosulepin should not drink alcohol. This is because both antidepressants and alcohol can cause drowsiness. If the two are taken together, severe drowsiness can result. This can lead to falls and accidents. As well as this, drinking alcohol may make depression and anxiety worse. However, once people are used to taking medication, then *very small amounts* of alcohol may not be harmful. It pays to be very careful, because alcohol affects people in different ways, especially when they are taking medication. Never drink alcohol and drive. Discuss any concerns you have with your doctor, pharmacist or nurse.

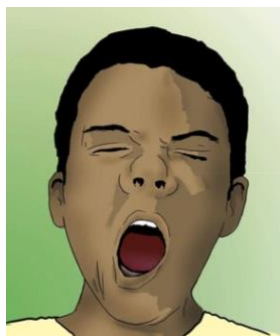
## Is it OK to stop taking dosulepin when symptoms go away?

No. If you stop taking dosulepin, your original symptoms are very likely to return. Most people need to remain on dosulepin for at least six months after they have fully recovered. You should always discuss with your prescriber any plans you have to reduce or stop any of your prescribed medicines.

## Are there any alternatives to dosulepin?

Yes, there are alternatives available. Although antidepressants have broadly similar therapeutic effects they differ in the side effects they produce. There are more than 20 antidepressants available so most people can find one which suits them. Psychological therapies can also help in some types of depression, either as an alternative to medication or alongside it.

## Summary of side effects



### **Drowsiness - Very common**

#### **What can be done about it?**

This should wear off within a few days or weeks. Discuss with your prescriber if this persists. Taking the medication at night-time may help, but beware of drowsiness in the following morning.



### **Blurred vision - Common**

#### **What can be done about it?**

This should wear off within a few days. Discuss with your prescriber if this persists. It may be necessary to switch to another medication. Symptoms will go away when switched to another medication.



### **Dry mouth - Common**

#### **What can be done about it?**

This should wear off within a few days. Sugar-free boiled sweets, chewing gum or eating citrus fruits may help. Discuss with your prescriber if this persists.



### **Constipation – Common**

#### **What can be done about it?**

Eat lots of fibre – fruit and vegetables are good sources. Drink plenty of fluids. Your prescriber may prescribe a laxative.



### **Postural hypotension – Common (low blood pressure)**

#### **What can be done about it?**

Try not to stand up too quickly. If you feel dizzy do not drive. This dizziness is not dangerous and should wear off after a few days.

Other (less common) side effects	How common is it and what can be done about it?
Sexual dysfunction - reduced libido (desire) and lack of orgasm in males and females. Impotence in males.	<b>Uncommon</b> Any changes should be reported to your prescriber. It may be necessary to switch to another medication. Symptoms should go away when switched to another medication.
Increased appetite and weight gain	<b>Uncommon</b> Try to eat healthily and take exercise.
Agitation	<b>Uncommon</b> This should wear off in a few days. Discuss with your prescriber if this persists.
Sweating	<b>Uncommon</b> Discuss this with your prescriber if it becomes troublesome.
Tachycardia (palpitations)	<b>Rare</b> Contact your prescriber if you experience palpitations.
Urinary retention (difficulty passing water)	<b>Rare</b> Contact your prescriber if you have any difficulty passing water.

Very common = almost everyone affected

Common = many people affected

Uncommon = some people affected

Rare = few people affected

Very rare = very few or no one affected

## Disclaimer

This leaflet does not replace the official manufacturer's Patient Information Leaflet.

For more information, visit [www.slam.nhs.uk/meds](http://www.slam.nhs.uk/meds) or speak to a health care professional.

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