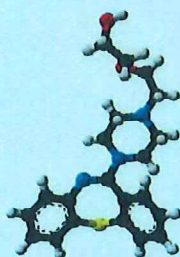


Quetiapine (pron. que-tyre-pean)



What is quetiapine?

Quetiapine (also known as Seroquel and Seroquel XL[®]) is usually used to help treat the symptoms of psychosis, schizophrenia, mania and bipolar depression, and to prevent these symptoms coming back. It is sometimes also used to help the symptoms of anxiety, dementia and depression. It is made as plain tablets and a sustained release (XL) tablet.

[By the way, XL doesn't mean Extra Large! It just means eXtra Long release, so only need to be taken once a day]

What does quetiapine help?

Quetiapine can help many symptoms. These can include psychosis (losing touch with reality) which can include hallucinations (seeing or hearing things that aren't there) and delusions (thinking something is true when it isn't). Quetiapine can also help mania (being high) or depression (being low).



How and when should I take quetiapine?

Swallow the tablets with at least half a glass of water whilst sitting or standing. This is to make sure that they reach the stomach and do not stick in your throat. Do not chew the tablets. Taking it at mealtimes may make it easier for you to remember as there is no problem about taking quetiapine with or after food. If you have the XL tablets and the label says to take it once a day this is usually best at bedtime as it may make you drowsy at first. The plain tablets should be taken twice a day, usually best in the morning and in the evening.



How long will I have to wait before it works?

This will depend on what you are taking it for but the effect usually starts in a week or so, and builds over several weeks.



How long will I need to keep taking quetiapine for?

This will depend on what you are taking it for. It may be for several months or years.



Can I stop taking quetiapine suddenly?

It is better not to do this without talking it over first with other people e.g. relatives or your doctor, nurse or pharmacist. Things normally work out much better if you stop medication in a planned way. Your symptoms can return if treatment is stopped too early. This may occur some weeks or even months after quetiapine has been stopped. When the time comes, you should withdraw quetiapine by a gradual reduction in the dose over several weeks.



What should I do if I forget to take a dose of quetiapine?

If you are taking the XL tablets, start again as soon as you remember if within about 12 hours. If you are taking the tablets, start again as soon as you remember if within about 4-6 hours. After this just take the next dose as normal. Do not try to catch up by taking two doses at once as you may get more side-effects. If you

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Can I cycle or drive while I am taking quetiapine?

You may feel a bit sleepy at first when taking quetiapine. Until this wears off, or you know how quetiapine affects you, be careful cycling and, if you have a license, do not drive or operate machinery.



What sort of side-effects might I get with quetiapine?

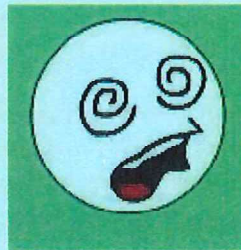
The table below will show you some of the main side effects you might get from quetiapine, and what you can do about them. The more common ones are near the top of the list.

Sleepiness



Feeling sleepy or sluggish. This can last for a few hours or longer after taking a dose. Don't drive, cycle or use machinery. Ask your doctor if you can take quetiapine at a different time of day. It should wear off after a while. If not, ask your doctor or nurse about this.

Feeling dizzy, light-headed or faint, especially when you stand up



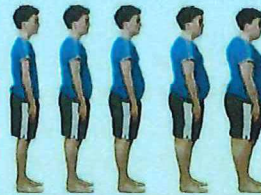
Do not stand up too quickly. Try and lie down when you feel it coming on. Do not cycle or drive.

Dry mouth



You may have not much saliva or spit. Suck sugar-free gum or boiled sweets. If it is bad, your doctor may be able to give you a mouth spray.

Weight gain



Eating more and putting on weight. A diet full of vegetables and fibre may help prevent weight gain.

Constipation



When you want to poop but can't (the opposite of diarrhoea). Make sure have eat enough fibre, cereals or fruit and you drink enough fluid. If this does not help, ask your doctor or pharmacist for a mild laxative.

Restlessness (known as "akathisia")



Feeling more on edge. You feel happier when moving around. Try and relax by taking deep breaths. Wear loose fitting clothes. Your doctor may be able to give you a medicine for it e.g. an anticholinergic.

Feeling sick or being sick, or stomach pain



This usually wears off in a few weeks. If not, let your doctor know. Taking it after food may help.

Headache



If your head is painful, paracetamol usually helps.

Do not be worried by this list of side effects. Some people get no side effects at all and others may get some effects that are not listed in this table. If you think you might have a side effect to your medicine, you should ask your doctor, nurse or pharmacist. If you want to know more, go to our website for links to other websites with more information.

The small print: This leaflet is to help you understand about your medicine. You should also read the manufacturer's Patient Information Leaflet (PIL). You may find lots more on the internet but beware as internet-based information is not always accurate. Do not share medicines with anyone else. Go to our website for fuller answers to these and many other questions e.g. driving, women's health, how it works, doses and interactions, and about the conditions. The "Handy charts" will help you compare the main medicines for each condition, how they work and their side effects.

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