

Amitriptyline (Elavil®)

ALAMEDA COUNTY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CARE SERVICES

Client's Name _____ Date _____

Initial Medication Instructions _____

What does this medication help to treat?

- Depressed, anxiety, irritable mood
- Difficulty thinking, concentrating, remembering
- Low energy or restless feeling
- Hopeless, guilty or worthless feeling

- Lack of interest or pleasure from things you used to enjoy
- Thoughts of hurting yourself or of suicide
- Sleeping or eating too much or not enough

Amitriptyline is sometimes prescribed for other uses; ask your prescriber for more information.

Other Information

- You should start to notice some benefits of this medication within 1 to 2 weeks after starting therapy. If you do not experience benefit after one month of treatment at the prescribed dose, contact your prescriber.
- Maximum benefits usually seen after 6 weeks or more.
- This medicine must be taken for several weeks before its full benefits are felt. Do not stop taking amitriptyline suddenly because you may experience dizziness, headache, nausea, sweating, increased heart rate or anxiety.
- Please inform your prescriber if you have a heart condition as this medication may worsen heart conditions.
- If you are pregnant, or planning to get pregnant contact your doctor immediately.

Side Effects and Management

Common (greater than 10 in 100 clients on this medication)

Dizziness	Get up slowly, and dangle your feet when rising from a chair, talk to your prescriber. Do not drive or operate machinery until you know how this medication affects you.
Dry mouth	Suck on sugarless gum or candy or melt bits of ice in your mouth. Call your prescriber if your mouth feels dry for more than 2 weeks.
Constipation	Drink plenty of water and increase fiber in your diet. Consult with your prescriber about other treatments.
Drowsiness	This medication is best taken at bedtime.
Appetite changes	Consult with your prescriber if it continues or becomes bothersome.
Blurred vision	May use lubricant eye drops (natural tears). Consult with your prescriber if it continues to be bothersome.

Uncommon (~1 to 10 in 100 clients on this medication)

Diarrhea, vomiting	Try taking the medication with food.
Headache	You may need Tylenol to relieve your headache. Talk to your prescriber if it becomes bothersome.
Agitation/Anxiety	Typically short-term (1-5 days) as your system adjusts. Contact prescriber if persistent.

Rare (less than 1 in 100 clients on this medication)

Call your prescriber immediately if you experience any of these:

- Extreme restlessness or suicidal thoughts
- Seizure
- Irregular heart rate
- Tremors or parkinsonism
- Increased/decreased blood sugar
- Low white blood count
- Infections: fever, sore throat, flu-like symptoms
- Heart attack
- Congestive heart failure
- Low blood sodium
- Jaundice
- Sexual dysfunction/decreased libido

References: Clinical Psychopharmacology, LexiComp 2011

NOTE: This information is not intended to cover all possible uses, precautions, interactions, or adverse effects for this medication. If you have further questions about the medications you are taking, check with your prescriber.