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PATIENT EDUCATION

Brexanolone

Zulresso / Historical U.S. infusion treatment

A guide to the former brexanolone treatment for postpartum depression.
Consult with your provider about currently available care.

HISTORICAL REFERENCE | US APPROVAL WITHDRAWN • APRIL 2025

US commercial availability ended in January 2025. An online archived label does not mean treatment is available.

What it is used for

Brexanolone was an IV treatment for postpartum depression. U.S. approval of Zulresso was withdrawn effective April 14, 2025, at the manufacturer's request after it stopped marketing the medication.

This sheet explains the former treatment. It does not indicate that an infusion is currently available. Ask your provider about current postpartum-depression options.

How it works

Brexanolone is a formulation of allopregnanolone, a neuroactive steroid. It enhances GABA-A receptor activity, increasing calming signaling in the brain.

Formulations

The former regimen was a continuous 60-hour IV infusion in a certified, monitored setting. It was not a take-home medication. Oral zuranolone is a different drug with its own instructions.

What to expect over time

In the original studies, improvement could occur during the infusion. Follow-up care remained necessary to assess whether benefit lasted and to manage ongoing depression.

Taking your medication

- Confirm current treatment options and availability with your provider.
- For any supervised infusion, follow the facility's medication, transportation, and monitoring instructions.
- Do not obtain an unverified compounded or online preparation as a substitute for a prescribed treatment.

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Side effects and safety

Possible side effects

- Sleepiness or excessive sedation
- Dizziness or flushing
- Loss of consciousness during infusion

Keeping track of treatment

Some side effects resolve with time; others may require a change of medication. Discuss persistent or bothersome side effects with your provider.

The former protocol required continuous oxygen monitoring and scheduled checks for sedation. Staff reduced or stopped the infusion if excessive sedation or loss of consciousness occurred.

Postpartum depression still needs follow-up after any brief treatment. Schedule an earlier appointment if your mood gets worse.

If you take too much

For a suspected overdose, call Poison Control at **1-800-222-1222** immediately, even if you feel well. Call 911 for a seizure, collapse, trouble breathing, or inability to wake.

Before you start

Discuss all sedatives, sleep apnea or other breathing problems, kidney disease, and pregnancy or breastfeeding with the treating team. Arrange help with infant care during a treatment that impairs alertness.

Medicines and interactions

Review all your medications with your provider, including over-the-counter medicines and supplements. Have new medications checked before taking them.

Alcohol, opioids, benzodiazepines, and other sedatives can increase sedation. Antidepressants and other medications were reviewed before the infusion; a treatment team must manage changes.

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Living with your treatment

When to get help

Emergency symptoms. Call 911 for inability to wake, slow breathing, collapse, or immediate danger to you or your baby.

Prompt medical advice. Seek immediate psychiatric assessment for confusion, hallucinations, extreme agitation, or very little need for sleep after childbirth. Postpartum psychosis is an emergency.

If you feel unsafe or have thoughts of self-harm, call 911 or go to an emergency department.

Your questions answered

Is this the same as zuranolone?
No. Zuranolone is an oral medication. Do not transfer the infusion instructions or dose to it.

What does the withdrawal notice mean?
FDA withdrew the approval after the manufacturer reported that it was no longer marketed and requested withdrawal. The notice is not a statement that every prior recipient was harmed.

Everyday tips

Keep a written postpartum treatment and follow-up plan.

Arrange practical support for sleep, meals, and infant care. Tell your provider if support is unavailable.

Storage and safety

Brexanolone was stored, prepared, and administered by the treatment facility. There is no home dosing or storage regimen in this guide.

Sources

FDA / Federal Register: Zulresso approval withdrawal (2025)
DailyMed: Historical Zulresso prescribing information

Educational handout; does not replace your prescription or provider's recommendations.