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PSYCHIATRY

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PATIENT EDUCATION

Pramipexole

Mirapex / Immediate-release and extended-release tablets

A guide for adults taking pramipexole.
Follow the directions on your prescription and your provider's recommendations.

DEPRESSION USE IS OFF-LABEL

REPORT SUDDEN SLEEPINESS OR NEW URGES

Formulations: Immediate-release and extended-release tablets have different schedules. Extended-release tablets are swallowed whole. The dose for depression may differ from the dose used for restless legs syndrome or Parkinson disease.

What it is used for

Pramipexole is approved for Parkinson disease and, in its immediate-release form, restless legs syndrome. In psychiatry, it is sometimes added to antidepressant treatment for depression that has not responded adequately. Depression treatment is off-label.

How it works

Pramipexole stimulates dopamine receptors. Dopamine signaling contributes to movement, motivation, and reward. A 2025 randomized trial found benefit when pramipexole was added for treatment-resistant depression; that finding does not make it suitable for everyone.

What to expect over time

A gradual increase may take several weeks. For depression, track mood, interest, motivation, and daily functioning rather than judging benefit from a single dose.

Sleepiness, nausea, or dizziness may appear before benefit. Report changes that interfere with work, driving, or ordinary activities.

Taking your medication

- Follow your specific starting schedule. The dose is usually increased gradually.
- Take with or without food; food may reduce nausea.
- Do not crush, split, or chew extended-release tablets.
- Follow the missed-dose instructions for your formulation. Do not double a dose. If treatment has been interrupted, consult with your provider before restarting.

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Side effects and safety

Possible side effects

- Nausea or constipation
- Sleepiness, fatigue, or sudden sleep episodes
- Dizziness when standing
- Swollen legs or ankles

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.

Watch for new gambling, spending, sexual, or eating urges that are difficult to control. A trusted person may notice these changes before you do. Report them promptly.

Review mood, sleep, hallucinations, blood pressure, and kidney function. The medicine can cause confusion or psychotic symptoms and may trigger mania in susceptible people.

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 kidney disease, low blood pressure, fainting, sleep disorders, bipolar disorder, psychosis, and previous problems with compulsive behavior.

Discuss pregnancy, pregnancy plans, and breastfeeding with your provider. Treatment decisions should consider both the medication and the condition being treated.

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, sleeping medicines, opioids, and other sedatives can worsen sleepiness. Do not drive after a sudden sleep episode until your provider has reassessed treatment.

Antipsychotics and dopamine-blocking nausea medicines may oppose its effects. Cimetidine and other medicines that affect kidney clearance may increase exposure. Do not adjust either medicine yourself.

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Living with your treatment

When to get help

Emergency symptoms. Get emergency care for a severe allergic reaction, collapse, or fever with severe stiffness and confusion, including after abruptly stopping treatment.

Prompt medical advice. Contact your provider promptly for sudden sleep episodes, hallucinations, new compulsive urges, severe dizziness, or unusually high energy with little sleep. Report worsening depression promptly.

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

Your questions answered

Does this prescription mean I have Parkinson disease?
No. The same medicine can be used for different reasons. Confirm whether your goal is depression augmentation, movement treatment, or restless legs relief.

Can I stop if side effects bother me?
Consult with your provider. Sudden reduction can cause withdrawal symptoms, including anxiety, depression, sweating, pain, and marked fatigue. A gradual reduction may be needed.

What if restless legs start earlier in the day?
Tell your provider. This can be augmentation, a treatment-related worsening of restless legs. Taking more on your own may make the problem harder to manage.

Everyday tips

Avoid driving until you know how it affects you. Sudden sleep can occur without much warning.

Bring specific observations about mood and impulses to follow-up visits. Stand up slowly if lightheaded.

Storage and safety

Keep medication in its labeled container, away from excess heat and moisture and out of reach of children and pets. Do not share it. Ask a pharmacy about disposal of unused medication.

Sources

MedlinePlus: Pramipexole (accessed 2026)
Browning et al.: PAX-D randomized trial, The Lancet Psychiatry (2025)

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