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PSYCHIATRY

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PATIENT EDUCATION

Selegiline

Emsam antidepressant patch / Separate oral Parkinson formulations

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

ONE PATCH AT A TIME / 24 HOURS

PATCH STRENGTHS: 6, 9, 12 MG PER 24 HOURS

Formulations: Emsam patches deliver 6, 9, or 12 mg over 24 hours. Oral tablets, capsules, or dissolving formulations have separate instructions.

What it is used for

The Emsam patch treats major depression in adults. Oral selegiline formulations are used for Parkinson disease under different labeling; their dose and food rules must not be substituted for patch instructions.

How it works

It inhibits monoamine oxidase, affecting breakdown of serotonin, norepinephrine, and dopamine. The route and dose determine how much gut tyramine metabolism is affected.

What to expect over time

Sleep, energy, or appetite may change before mood improves. Benefit usually builds over several weeks; some conditions need a longer trial at a useful dose.

Track the symptoms you are treating and how you manage daily activities. Keep follow-up appointments. Schedule an earlier appointment if your mood gets worse.

Taking your medication

- Apply one patch daily to clean, dry, intact skin at an approved site. Remove the old patch first, rotate sites, and do not cut patches.
- Avoid heating pads, hot tubs, or other direct heat over the patch.
- If a patch is missed or falls off, follow the leaflet; never apply extra patches to make up a dose.
- Follow the food rules for your strength and have every new medication checked.

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Side effects and safety

Possible side effects

- Skin irritation at the application site
- Insomnia, headache, or dry mouth
- Dizziness or low blood pressure when standing

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.

Antidepressants can increase suicidal thoughts in people under 25. Watch for changes in mood or behavior at any age, especially when starting treatment or changing a dose.

Have blood pressure checked. Review dizziness, sleep, and medication or food exposures. Keep the written interaction and diet instructions available.

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 heart or blood-vessel disease, uncontrolled high blood pressure, liver disease, seizures, bipolar symptoms, and planned surgery.

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.

Many antidepressants, stimulants, decongestants, tramadol, meperidine, dextromethorphan, and other medicines must not be combined. A pharmacist should check every prescription, OTC medicine, and supplement.

Switching intervals depend on the other medicine. Many require at least 14 days; fluoxetine generally requires at least five weeks before an MAOI. Never manage a switch yourself.

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SELEGILINE / 03

Living with your treatment

When to get help

Emergency symptoms. Get emergency care for a sudden severe headache, chest pain, a pounding heartbeat, neck stiffness, vomiting, or visual changes. These can signal a dangerous blood-pressure reaction. Fever with agitation and muscle rigidity may be serotonin syndrome.

Prompt medical advice. Contact your provider for marked dizziness, faintness, worsening depression, or unusually high energy with little need for sleep. Do not treat a suspected blood-pressure crisis with extra medication on your own.

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

Your questions answered

Which patch strengths require food restrictions?
The 9- and 12-mg patches require a low-tyramine diet. Continue it for two weeks after stopping those strengths or reducing to 6 mg. Starting and remaining at 6 mg does not ordinarily require that diet under U.S. labeling.

Do medication restrictions still apply at 6 mg?
Yes. The lower patch strength does not remove dangerous drug interactions or required switching intervals.

Everyday tips

Keep written diet and drug-interaction instructions with your medication list.

Fold used patches adhesive sides together and keep them away from children and pets.

Tell emergency, dental, and anesthesia teams that you take an MAOI.

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

Official prescribing information: selegiline

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