Jeffrey Panko NP
PSYCHIATRY

Jeffrey Panko, PMHNP-BC
Phone 646-549-4694 | Fax 646-558-4238
JMPankoNP@JeffreyPanko.com
jeffreypanko.com

PATIENT EDUCATION

Trazodone

Generic oral antidepressant / Common off-label sleep use

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

TABLETS: 50, 100, 150, 300 MG

TAKE SHORTLY AFTER A MEAL OR LIGHT SNACK

Formulations: Immediate-release tablets may be taken at bedtime or in divided doses depending on the goal and dose. Do not assume every prescription is a single sleep dose.

What it is used for

Trazodone is approved for depression. Lower doses are often used off-label for insomnia, but a sleep dose may not adequately treat depression. The expected benefit and risks should match the reason for use.

How it works

It blocks selected serotonin receptors and inhibits serotonin reuptake. Histamine and alpha-1 effects contribute to drowsiness and low blood pressure.

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

- Take immediate-release trazodone shortly after a meal or light snack.
- Follow the prescribed timing and any instructions for splitting scored tablets.
- If you miss a dose, take it when you remember unless it is almost time for the next dose. Then skip it. Do not double a dose.
- Consult with your provider before reducing or stopping regular treatment.

Jeffrey Panko NP
PSYCHIATRY

Jeffrey Panko, PMHNP-BC
Phone 646-549-4694 | Fax 646-558-4238
JMPankoNP@JeffreyPanko.com
jeffreypanko.com

TRAZODONE / 02

Side effects and safety

Possible side effects

- Drowsiness or morning grogginess
- Dizziness or low blood pressure
- Dry mouth, nausea, or constipation
- Headache

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.

Tell your provider about emotional numbness, unusual agitation, or a reduced need for sleep with increased energy. These changes may call for a treatment adjustment.

Report palpitations, falls, unusual bleeding, or confusion. QT prolongation and low sodium are relevant risks 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 any history of mania or bipolar disorder, seizures, heart disease, glaucoma, and kidney or liver problems.

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.

Do not combine with MAOIs. Other serotonergic drugs can cause serotonin syndrome.

CYP3A inhibitors can raise levels. QT-prolonging medicines, alcohol, sedatives, and blood-pressure medicines add important risks.

Jeffrey Panko NP
PSYCHIATRY

Jeffrey Panko, PMHNP-BC
Phone 646-549-4694 | Fax 646-558-4238
JMPankoNP@JeffreyPanko.com
jeffreypanko.com

Living with your treatment

When to get help

Emergency symptoms. Get emergency care for an erection lasting four hours, fainting with palpitations, a seizure, severe allergy, or fever with confusion and muscle rigidity.

Prompt medical advice. Contact your provider right away for marked agitation, new hallucinations, or unusually high energy with very little need for sleep.

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

Your questions answered

Does a low sleep dose treat depression?
Not necessarily. Review mood symptoms separately from the ability to fall asleep.

Is long-term sleep benefit guaranteed?
No. Review ongoing benefit, next-day alertness, and CBT-I or other treatment options for persistent insomnia.

Everyday tips

A regular dose time and refill reminder can help prevent missed doses.

Bring a few specific observations to appointments: sleep, motivation, anxiety, and activities that have become easier or harder.

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: trazodone
Official prescribing information: trazodone

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