Jeffrey Panko NP
PSYCHIATRY

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

PATIENT EDUCATION

# Zuranolone

Zurzuvae / Oral capsules / Schedule IV

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

14-DAY EVENING COURSE | NO DRIVING FOR AT LEAST 12 HOURS

**Formulations:** Capsules come in several strengths. The prescribed dose may require more than one capsule. Kidney or liver impairment and certain interacting medicines require a lower dose.

## What it is used for

Zuranolone treats postpartum depression in adults. It is a 14-day treatment course that may be used alone or with an oral antidepressant. Depression after childbirth is a medical condition that deserves treatment and practical support.

## How it works

Zuranolone enhances signaling at GABA-A receptors. GABA helps regulate the activity of brain cells. Its effects on this system can improve depressive symptoms and can also cause sleepiness and impaired coordination.

## What to expect over time

Some people notice improvement within days. Review mood and functioning during the course and after it ends. Benefit and the need for ongoing treatment vary.

Plan transportation and help with infant care before starting. You may not accurately recognize how much the medicine is affecting your alertness.

## Taking your medication

- Take your prescribed dose once each evening for 14 days, with food containing fat. Follow the meal guidance supplied with the medicine.
- Swallow capsules whole. Do not open, crush, or chew them.
- If you miss a dose, skip it and take the next dose at the usual time the following evening. Do not take an extra dose.
- Do not drive or do hazardous work for at least 12 hours after every dose. Avoid those activities longer if you remain impaired.

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# Side effects and safety

## Possible side effects

- Sleepiness or drowsiness
- Dizziness, slowed thinking, or poor coordination
- Fatigue or weakness
- Diarrhea

## 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.

Report excessive sedation, confusion, or trouble walking promptly; your provider may reduce the dose or stop treatment. Falls and breathing problems are more likely with other sedatives.

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.

## 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 or liver disease, falls, substance use, bipolar disorder, and every sedating medication you take.

Zuranolone may harm a developing pregnancy. Use effective contraception during treatment and for one week after the last dose if you could become pregnant.

Discuss breastfeeding with your provider before starting. The medicine enters breast milk; your plan should consider the available evidence, your symptoms, and your infant's needs.

## Medicines and interactions

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

Avoid alcohol. Opioids, benzodiazepines, sleeping pills, and other sedatives can worsen impairment and may cause breathing problems.

Strong CYP3A4 inhibitors require a lower dose. CYP3A4 inducers can make treatment less effective and should be avoided. Have antibiotics, antifungals, antivirals, seizure medicines, and supplements checked.

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# Living with your treatment

## When to get help

**Emergency symptoms.** Call 911 for slow breathing, inability to wake, collapse, or a severe allergic reaction. Get emergency help for confusion or unusual beliefs that put you or your baby at risk.

**Prompt medical advice.** Contact your provider promptly for severe sleepiness, difficulty walking, worsening depression, or new agitation. Arrange an earlier appointment if your mood gets worse.

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

## Your questions answered

**Can I drive in the morning?**
Only after at least 12 hours have passed since the dose, and only if you are able to drive safely. Feeling awake earlier does not override the 12-hour restriction.

**Should I stop my usual antidepressant?**
Consult with your provider. Zuranolone can be added to an antidepressant, but the combination and your ongoing treatment plan need review.

**Can I repeat the course myself?**
No. Persistent or returning symptoms need reassessment. Do not extend treatment or use leftover capsules without instructions.

## Everyday tips

Arrange help with nighttime feeding, carrying the baby, and other tasks if you are drowsy or unsteady.

Keep the follow-up visit after the 14-day course, even if you feel much better.

## Storage and safety

Store securely at room temperature, away from children. Zuranolone can be misused and may cause dependence. Do not share capsules; ask the dispensing pharmacy about disposal of leftovers.

### Sources

DailyMed: Zurzuvae prescribing information and Medication Guide (2026)
FDA: Zurzuvae Drug Trials Snapshot (2023)

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