

DOXEPIN

DRUG NAME

Generic: Doxepin

Class of drug: Tricyclic antidepressant

Brands in Australia: Deptran

DOSAGE FORM

Available as a 10 mg capsule, 25 mg capsule or 50 mg tablet. Quantity 50.

HOW IT WORKS

Tricyclic antidepressants balance brain chemicals (serotonin and noradrenaline) that are involved in both mood and how pain signals are processed. They help “turn down the volume” of pain signals in the spinal cord and brain. They are often used in low doses for nerve pain, headaches, and widespread pain conditions, not necessarily for depression.

Onset of action

- For sleep: some benefit may occur **within the first few days**.
- For pain: usually takes **2–4 weeks** for effect.
- Full effect may take up to **6 weeks**.

DOSAGE & FREQUENCY

Your doctor will advise on the starting dose and guide the dose changes.

- start with _____
- if tolerated, increase to _____ after _____ days
- if necessary, increase by _____ every _____ week(s)
- if successive increases are well tolerated *and bring additional benefit*, continue to titrate up to a maximum of _____
- to be reviewed by your doctor on _____

Often titrated slowly to minimise side effects. Can be increased gradually depending on response and side effects. Higher doses are sometimes used for depression but not for pain.

ROUTE OF ADMINISTRATION

Oral (by mouth) unless otherwise specified.

WHAT ELSE SHOULD I KNOW WHILE TAKING THIS MEDICATION

- You may get side effects such as blurred vision, drowsiness and dry mouth. They may be troublesome but may lessen or disappear after about 7 days. Try taking this medicine at night to reduce daytime drowsiness. Discuss any problems with your doctor or pharmacist.
- You may feel dizzy on standing when taking this medicine. Get up gradually from sitting or lying to minimise this effect; sit or lie down if you become dizzy.

- Avoid driving and operating machinery until you know how you react to the medication and your doctor says that you can.
- Tricyclic antidepressants may increase the effects of alcohol.
- Do not stop taking this medicine suddenly unless your doctor tells you to.

STORAGE INSTRUCTIONS

Store at room temperature, below 25°C, away from moisture and sunlight. Keep out of reach of children.

DISPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS

Return unused or expired medication to your pharmacy for safe disposal.

MISSED DOSE INSTRUCTIONS

Ask your doctor or pharmacist.

EMERGENCY INSTRUCTIONS

Seek urgent medical attention if you:

- Take too much (overdose may cause severe drowsiness, seizures, irregular heartbeat, confusion).
- Develop chest pain, severe dizziness, or fainting.
- Experience severe allergic reaction (swelling, difficulty breathing).

COMMON SIDE EFFECTS

- Drowsiness, fatigue
- Dry mouth
- Blurred vision
- Constipation
- Dizziness or lightheadedness
- Weight gain

SERIOUS SIDE EFFECTS

Seek immediate medical attention:

- Irregular heartbeat or chest pain (can worsen angina)
- Severe confusion or hallucinations
- Seizures
- Suicidal thoughts or sudden mood changes
- Eye pain or vision changes (acute-angle glaucoma)
- Signs of serotonin syndrome (agitation, fever, tremors, sweating, diarrhoea, stiff muscles)

MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR SIDE EFFECTS

- Drowsiness: Take at night. Avoid driving until you know how it affects you.
- Dry mouth: Chew sugar-free gum, frequent sips of water.
- Constipation: Increase dietary fibre and fluids.
- Weight gain: Monitor diet and stay physically active.
- Dizziness: Rise slowly from sitting or lying positions.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Interactions:

- Avoid alcohol (increases drowsiness and overdose risk).
- Do not take with other antidepressants, tramadol, or St John's Wort (risk of serotonin syndrome).
- May increase sedative effects of sleeping tablets or antihistamines.

Precautions:

- Not usually recommended during pregnancy or breastfeeding unless clearly necessary.
- Dose adjustment may be needed in liver or kidney disease.
- May worsen glaucoma or urinary retention (especially in men with prostate problems).

Elective surgery advice

- Usually **continued before surgery**, but your anaesthetist must be informed.
- May interact with sedatives and anaesthetic medicines, increasing risk of low blood pressure or drowsiness.
- Do not stop suddenly, especially if taken long term.

TITRATION DIARY

Date	Dose Taken	Side Effects	Notes (e.g., sleep, pain relief)