

Aripiprazole (Abilify[®], Abilify Maintena[®])

Aripiprazole is most often used to treat psychosis. It is also used to treat mania and sometimes depression.

How do I take aripiprazole?

- Orally (by mouth) as a tablet (taken daily)
- Long-acting injections given by needle into a muscle in the upper part of your arm or side of your hip (usually given once every 4 weeks)

How does aripiprazole help?

- Aripiprazole treats different symptoms, depending on why it is being used. Symptoms will be different for each person.
- Symptoms of **psychosis** may include:
 - › Hearing, seeing, or sensing things that are not real (hallucinations)
 - › Believing things that are not true, like thinking that someone is after you or that you have special powers (delusions)
 - › Trouble thinking clearly
 - › Getting frustrated or agitated more easily than usual
 - › Loss of interest in yourself or others
 - › Becoming withdrawn or staying away from others
 - › Intense fear or worries
- Symptoms of **mania** may include:
 - › Racing thoughts
 - › Feeling like you need less sleep
 - › More talkative
 - › More active
 - › More irritable
 - › Being easily distracted
 - › Making poor choices
 - › Feeling important, powerful, or like nothing can hurt you
- Symptoms of **depression** may include:
 - › Feeling sad, hopeless, and/or helpless
 - › Changes in your usual sleep pattern
 - › Loss of interest in things you usually enjoy
 - › Changes in your appetite and/or weight
 - › Loss of energy and/or concentration
 - › Thoughts of harming yourself

There may be other reasons aripiprazole was prescribed. Talk to your doctor or nurse to learn why it was prescribed for you.

How quickly will aripiprazole work?

- Many symptoms improve quickly (hours to days) while others get better over time (weeks to months).
- Frustration and agitation may get better quickly.
- Your sleep and mood should get better within the first week or so.
- Slowly over 2 to 8 weeks, your thoughts will become more clear and organized.
- It can take months for interest in yourself and things you used to enjoy to come back.
- When you start receiving the long-acting injection, you may be asked to keep taking the tablets until the injection starts to take effect.

How long should I take aripiprazole?

- This will depend on why you are taking aripiprazole and how well it works for you.
- Aripiprazole helps to treat your symptoms and keeps them from coming back.
- **Do not stop taking aripiprazole without talking to your doctor.** Your symptoms may come back if you stop taking it.

What are the possible side effects of aripiprazole?

- Some side effects start early and go away over time. Other side effects only start after taking aripiprazole for some time. Some side effects are mild and others are more serious.
- **Talk about side effects with your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist before you start treatment and regularly while taking this medication.**
- **Common side effects:**
 - › Trouble sleeping, restlessness, agitation, anxiety, headache, dizziness, feeling lightheaded, weakness, upset stomach, vomiting (throwing up), constipation (not able to poop)
- **Less common side effects:**
 - › Tremors (shaking), muscle stiffness and/or slowness, muscle spasms, sleepiness, weight gain, changes in blood sugar and/or cholesterol, dizziness, fast heartbeat

If you have any of the following rare but serious symptoms, call your primary health care provider (regular doctor or nurse practitioner) or 811:

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| › Rash | › Sore mouth, gums, or throat | › Trouble seeing and/or talking |
| › Very bad headache | › Not peeing or pooping for more than a couple of days | › Loss of muscle control (often in your tongue and lips) |
| › Fainting | › Muscle pain | › Uncontrollable urges to gamble, shop, binge eat, or have sex |
| › Fast breathing | › Sudden numbness | |
| › Fever (temperature above 38° C/100.4° F) | | |
| › Confusion | | |
| › Sudden weakness | | |

If you cannot reach your doctor, call 911 or go to the nearest Emergency Department right away.

What else do I need to know about aripiprazole?

- Aripiprazole may increase the effects of alcohol (like drowsiness, dizziness, and impaired thinking), which can be dangerous.
- Aripiprazole may affect your body's ability to control body temperature. If this happens, avoid hot, humid places and talk to your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist.
- Tell your doctor if you think you are pregnant, plan to become pregnant, or are breastfeeding.
- Check with your doctor or pharmacist before starting any new medications. This includes medications you buy at the drugstore and any natural health products or supplements you may be using.

The information in this brochure is for informational and educational purposes only. The information is not intended to be and does not constitute health care or medical advice. If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider. If you have ANY questions about your medication, please ask your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist.