

# Olanzapine (Zyprexa<sup>®</sup>, Zyprexa<sup>®</sup> Zydys<sup>®</sup>)

Olanzapine is most often used to treat psychosis or mania.

## How do I take olanzapine?

- Orally (by mouth) as a tablet (taken daily)
- Orally as a quick-dissolving tablet (taken daily). The tablet can be placed anywhere in your mouth to dissolve. It can also be mixed in a glass of water, milk, orange juice, or apple juice. Stir and drink all of the contents right away.

## How does olanzapine help?

- Olanzapine 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  - › Becoming withdrawn or staying away from others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

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

## How quickly will olanzapine 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.

## How long should I take olanzapine?

- This will depend on why you are taking olanzapine and how well it works for you.
- Olanzapine helps to treat your symptoms and keeps them from coming back.

- **Do not stop taking olanzapine without talking to your doctor.** Your symptoms may come back if you stop taking it.

### What are the possible side effects of olanzapine?

- Some side effects start early and go away over time. Other side effects only start after taking olanzapine 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:**
  - › Sleepiness, constipation (not able to poop), feeling more hungry, weight gain, blurry vision, headache, higher cholesterol and/or blood sugar, restlessness, fast heartbeat
- **Less common side effects:**
  - › Dry mouth, dry eyes, dizziness, sexual dysfunction, tremors (shaking), muscle stiffness, stuffy or runny nose, confusion

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

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

### What else do I need to know about olanzapine?

- Olanzapine may increase the effects of alcohol (like drowsiness, dizziness, and impaired thinking), which can be dangerous.
- Olanzapine 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.