

Mirtazapine

(Remeron[®], Remeron RD[®])

PURPOSE

Mirtazapine is an antidepressant used to treat the symptoms of depression. Depression is a disorder which goes beyond feelings of “sadness” or “feeling down”. Some symptoms of depression include low mood, feeling of guilt, hopelessness, and worthlessness, significant unintentional weight change, loss of interest, sleep and eating disturbances, low sex drive, poor concentration, and even suicidal thoughts. This illness occurs due to imbalances of certain chemicals or “messengers” in the brain. Mirtazapine works to restore the balance of certain brain chemicals. It may sometimes be used as a “helper” medication with other antidepressants to help optimize therapy.

BENEFITS FROM MIRTAZAPINE

The symptoms which antidepressants have been found to help include:

- + Depressive or low mood, fatigue, low energy
- + Isolation, lack of interest
- + Suicidal thoughts
- + Loss of appetite and unintentional weight loss

Other Benefits:

- + Improved sleep
- + Reduced irritability and increased calmness
- + Improved ability to concentrate on activities
- + Compared with other antidepressants, mirtazapine may cause less sexual dysfunction, nausea and other gastrointestinal side-effects

STREET DRUGS OR ALCOHOL WILL DECREASE THE BENEFITS OF MIRTAZAPINE AND INCREASE CHANCES OF NEEDING TO BE IN HOSPITAL

BE PATIENT – it takes a while

This medication will start to help after the first week but may take 4 - 6 weeks to work. Take this medication ONLY as prescribed by your doctor. DO NOT take more of it, or use it more often than recommended.

DO NOT stop this medication suddenly without consulting your doctor.

If you forget to take a dose, you should take it as soon as possible. If it is close to the time of your next dose, you should skip the missed dose and continue with your regular schedule. DO NOT take two doses at once.

POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF MIRTAZAPINE

- ☞ Drowsiness at lower doses
- ☞ Anxiety or restlessness during first few weeks of treatment
- ☞ Headache
- ☞ Sweating
- ☞ Dry mouth
- ☞ Blurred vision
- ☞ Dizziness or orthostatic hypotension (a drop in blood pressure when standing up)
- ☞ Constipation
- ☞ Weight gain

Some of these side effects disappear with treatment, while others may not. You may experience other side effects not listed here. Please check with your doctor, nurse or pharmacist if any side effect becomes bothersome.

Increases in weight can occur with this antidepressant. Healthy eating and regular exercise will reduce the chance of this occurring.

Inform your Doctor as soon as possible if you develop:

- ☞ Dizziness or fainting
- ☞ Tachycardia (rapid heart beat)

Many of these symptoms can be controlled either by dosage adjustment or switching to another medication.

PRECAUTIONS

- Always inform your doctor, nurse, dentist or pharmacist about your medication before any treatment
- As mirtazapine may interact with other medications, you should check with your doctor or pharmacist before taking any prescription, over-the-counter medications, and herbal remedies.
- As mirtazapine may cause drowsiness, you should know how you react to this medicine before you drive, use hazardous machinery or perform other tasks that require alertness
- Consult your Doctor before consuming any alcohol while on any medication
- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or breast-feeding before you take this medication

STORAGE OF MEDICATION

Store away from heat and direct light. Avoid storing in the bathroom medicine cabinet as the heat or moisture may cause the medication to breakdown.

KEEP OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN

*Approved by Riverview Hospital
Priorities and Evaluation Committee 2006*



**BC Mental Health &
Addiction Services**

An agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority