

Agomelatine

(pronounced a – go – mela -teen)

Why has agomelatine been prescribed?

Agomelatine is an antidepressant. This medication is prescribed to treat depression.

What are the benefits of taking agomelatine?

Antidepressants are effective in reducing the severity of the symptoms of depression. They also shorten the time to recovery and prevent depression returning.

Are there any precautions with agomelatine?

Agomelatine is suitable for most people. As with all medicines, however, there are precautions. Your prescriber will usually check that it is safe to prescribe agomelatine, but let your prescriber know if any of the following apply to you, as extra care may be needed:

- a) if you have dementia, diabetes or suffer from liver trouble.
- b) if you are taking any antidepressants, anticonvulsants, medication for malaria, schizophrenia, anxiety or insomnia, an antibiotic called ciprofloxacin or a medication for attention deficit disorder called atomoxetine. Also, tell your prescriber if you buy any medicine 'over the counter' from a pharmacy or supermarket. Please also tell your prescriber if you take any alternative or complimentary medicine such as Chinese herbal medicines. St John's Wort should not be taken by patients prescribed agomelatine.
- c) if you are pregnant, breast feeding, or wish to become pregnant.
- d) If you are lactose intolerant as the tablets contain lactose.

What is the usual dose of agomelatine?

The starting dose is usually 25mg a day. This may sometimes be increased after a couple of weeks to 50mg. The usual dose of agomelatine is 25mg or 50mg.

How should agomelatine be taken?

Agomelatine is usually taken once a day, at night. However, you and your prescriber may decide that it is better for you to take the medicine at another time.

What form does agomelatine come in?

Agomelatine is available as tablets only. The strength available is 25mg.

What should be done if a dose is missed?

If you forget a dose, take it as soon as you remember. If you miss a whole day's dose – just carry on with the next day's dose as usual. If you miss more than two days, speak to your prescriber.

What will happen when agomelatine is first taken?

Agomelatine, like many medicines, does not work straight away. For example, it may take several days or even weeks for some symptoms to improve. To begin with, some people find that agomelatine may help them feel more calm and relaxed. Later, (usually in two to three weeks) other symptoms should begin to improve. Many people do not experience any side effects. However some people may experience side effects. We have listed potential side effects in the table below, whether or not they are likely to be short or long-term and what measures can be taken is also described. There are other possible side effects – we have listed only the most important ones. Ask your doctor, pharmacist or nurse if you are worried about anything else that you think might be a side effect. Further information on side effects is available in the official manufacturer's leaflet.

Reporting side effects

The 'Yellow Card' scheme encourages patients to report any side effects that they feel may be caused by their medication. Ask your doctor, pharmacist or nurse for the forms if you wish to report any side effects. Alternatively, telephone 0800 100 3352 or go to www.mhra.gov.uk.

Is agomelatine addictive?

Agomelatine is not addictive. Unlike other antidepressants it should not cause withdrawal effects when stopped suddenly.

What about alcohol?

It is recommended that people taking agomelatine should not drink alcohol. This is because both antidepressants and alcohol can cause drowsiness. If the two are taken together, severe drowsiness can result. This can lead to falls and accidents. As well as this, drinking alcohol may make depression and anxiety worse. However, once people are used to taking medication, then very small amounts of alcohol may not be harmful. It pays to be very careful, because alcohol affects people in different ways, especially when they are taking medication. Never drink alcohol and drive. Discuss any concerns you may have with your doctor, pharmacist or nurse.

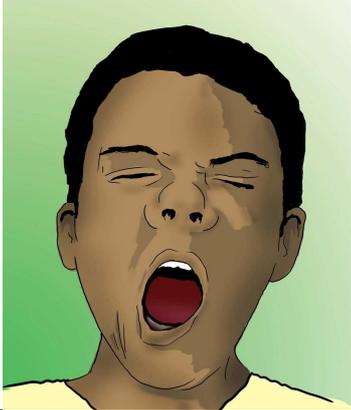
Is it OK to stop taking agomelatine when symptoms go away?

No. If you stop taking agomelatine your original symptoms are very likely to return. Most people need to remain on agomelatine for at least six months after they have fully recovered. You should always discuss with your prescriber any plans you have to reduce or stop any of your prescribed medicines.

Are there any alternatives to agomelatine?

Yes, there are alternatives available. Although antidepressants have broadly similar therapeutic effects they differ in the side effects they produce. There are more than 20 antidepressants available so most people can find one which suits them.

Summary of side effects

Side effect	Side effect
Drowsiness - Common What can be done about it? This usually wears off in a few weeks.	
(Other less common) side effects	How common is it and what can be done about it?
Dizziness	Uncommon This may wear off within a few days. Discuss with your prescriber if this persists.
Headache	Uncommon This should wear off within a few days. Paracetamol can be taken but discuss with your prescriber if this persists.
Nausea (with or without vomiting)	Uncommon This should wear off within a few days. Taking the medication with food may help. Discuss with your prescriber if this persists.
Sweating	Rare Discuss this with your prescriber if it becomes troublesome
Blurred vision	Rare This should wear off within a few days. Discuss with your prescriber if this persists. It may be necessary to switch to another medication.
Agitation	Rare This should wear off in a few days. Discuss with your prescriber if this persists.
Rash	Very rare Stop taking agomelatine. Contact your doctor, pharmacist or nurse for advice.
Liver damage	Very rare Report any signs of bruising or bleeding to your prescriber. Your doctor will do blood tests.

*Very common = almost everyone affected Common = many people affected Uncommon = some people affected
Rare = few people affected Very rare = very few or no one affected*

Disclaimer

This leaflet is to help you understand more about your medication. This is not an official manufacturer's Patient Information Leaflet (see <http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/>). Remember, leaflets like this can only describe some of the effects of medication. You may also find other books or leaflets useful. If you have access to the internet you may find a lot of information there as well, but be careful, as internet based information is not always accurate. If in doubt consult your GP or a health care professional.

This leaflet has been supplied by:

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