

# Medication Information Sheet



## **TCA's (tri-cyclic, anti-depressants)**

*amitriptyline, nortriptyline, Elavil, Aventyl, Pamelor and others.*

*Medications are only ONE part of a successful treatment plan. They are appropriate when they provide benefit, improve function and have either no or mild, manageable side effects. Importantly, medications (even if natural) are chemical substances not expected in the body, and as such have side effects. Some of the side effects might be unknown. The use of medications/drugs for any purpose requires patient consent. This practice does NOT require a patient to use any medication.*

### **Information & potential benefits**

TCA's are a special type of medication that were among the first medications used to treat depression. It was discovered over time that TCA's were effective at helping control chronic pain. The types of pain that TCA's are most effective at controlling include migraine headache prevention, neuropathy (nerve pain), Fibromyalgia and several others.

### **Potential risks and side effects**

Common and basic side effects include dizziness, drowsiness, dry mouth, excitement, headache, impotence, nausea, nightmares, sensitivity to sunlight, sweating, tiredness, upset stomach, vomiting, weakness, weight loss or gain. Seek medical attention immediately if you experience the following, severe allergic reactions (rash; hives; difficulty breathing; tightness in the chest; swelling of the mouth, face, lips, or tongue); blurred vision or other vision changes; chest pain; confusion; constipation; fainting; fast, slow, or irregular heartbeat; fever; frequent or difficult urination; hallucinations; impulsive behavior, unusual changes in behavior; jaw, neck, or muscle spasms; mental or mood changes panic attacks; ringing in the ears; seizures; severe dizziness; stomach pain; suicidal thinking or behavior; swelling of the testicles; tremor; trouble sleeping; trouble walking or keeping your balance; twitching of the face or tongue; uncontrolled movements of arms and legs or stiffness; unusual bleeding or bruising; worsening of depression; yellowing of the skin or eyes. **TCA's must be taken as directed as even a slight overdose can be fatal.** TCA's can interact with a large number of other medications, please check with your pharmacist to make sure your medications don't interact. Do not stop taking this medication abruptly.

### **Dosing information**

The smallest dose that achieves relief should be used. Medication should be started at small doses and gradually increased to get to desired effect, and avoid side effects.

### **Important information**

Disclaimer: This is for informational purposes only. This does not replace the instructions you received from your provider, does not constitute initiation of medical treatment or establishment of a patient-physician relationship, does not constitute any form of recommendation, prescription or medical advice, and does not imply that the medication is appropriate or FDA approved for any condition. This information is not a complete listing of instructions, doses, uses or side effects. If this was prescribed to you, you must review this information with your pharmacist and prescriber before starting the medication. Any medication may interfere with the ability to drive, concentrate or operate machinery; patients must be responsible for their own behavior and should not engage in any dangerous activity if there is any question of impairment. All medications have side effects and drug interactions, some serious, some fatal. Let all of your practitioners and pharmacists know about every substance used. Alcohol, herbals or illegal drugs are not considered safe with these medications. Assume no medication is safe during pregnancy or while breast feeding. The medication may interfere with birth control. Almost any medication can cause sleepiness, insomnia, dizziness, confusion, hallucinations, anxiety, panic, constipation or diarrhea, headache, chest pain and nausea or vomiting, among others. Most medications should NOT be stopped suddenly because of the risk of withdrawal.