

Brexpiprazole

Rexulti, an antipsychotic medicine

This medicine is added to an antidepressant when it is not enough, and it also treats psychosis with less restlessness.

WHAT IT TREATS

Depression add-on,
psychosis

HOW YOU TAKE IT

Once daily, food optional

WHEN IT WORKS

1 to 2 weeks; more by 6

HABIT FORMING

No

⚠ IMPORTANT SAFETY WARNING

Older adults with dementia have a higher risk of death on this medicine, and in dementia it is used only for agitation in Alzheimer's disease. In young people it can raise thoughts of suicide early on. Call **988** if that starts.

① WHAT THIS MEDICINE DOES

- **Brexpiprazole** steadies dopamine and serotonin signals, which can lift depression that an antidepressant alone did not fix.
- It also treats schizophrenia, and it is the only medicine approved for agitation in people with Alzheimer's disease.
- As an add-on for depression it does not replace your antidepressant. You keep taking both unless your prescriber says otherwise.
- It is a close cousin of aripiprazole with less restlessness and a bit more weight gain, which is why people get switched between them.

② HOW TO TAKE IT

- Take it **once a day**, with or without food, at a time you will remember. Morning suits most people fine.
- Swallow the tablet whole with water. There is no need to split it unless your prescriber wrote it that way.
- Miss a dose? Take it when you remember unless the next one is close. Never take two tablets to catch up.
- This medicine stays in your body a long time, so wait **2 weeks** after any dose change before judging it.
- Store it at room temperature, away from heat and damp, and keep it in the container the pharmacy gave you.

📈 WHAT TO EXPECT

- For depression, the first signs are often better sleep and more energy in **1 to 2 weeks**, with mood following by 6 weeks.
- For psychosis, agitation eases first, then voices and suspicious thinking fade over the next few weeks.
- Working looks like getting more done, caring about people again, and thoughts that no longer circle the same fear.
- Because it clears slowly, one missed day rarely undoes progress, but a week off can bring symptoms back.

♥ COMMON SIDE EFFECTS

- Weight gain averages **3 to 7 pounds**, mostly from a bigger appetite, and it tends to show up in the first few months.
- Weight, blood pressure, blood sugar, and cholesterol are checked at the start, at 12 weeks, and yearly to catch changes early.
- Planning meals ahead, keeping protein at breakfast, and walking most days blunt the appetite this medicine can bring on.
- A cannot-sit-still, need-to-keep-moving feeling happens in about **1 in 12** people and is often mistaken for worse anxiety.
- That restlessness is a side effect and it responds to a lower dose or an added medicine, so report it rather than enduring it.
- Sleepiness, headache, and tiredness are common early and usually settle within the first couple of weeks.

⚠ CALL YOUR PRESCRIBER OR GET HELP RIGHT AWAY IF

- Call **911** for muscle stiffness with a high fever, confusion, or a racing heart. That combination is an emergency.
- Report movements of the mouth, tongue, or hands you did not choose. Early treatment matters, so call at the first sign.
- Call **988** if thoughts of ending your life show up, and tell your prescriber the same day.
- Call your prescriber for new urges to gamble, shop, eat, or have sex that you cannot rein in, or for fainting.

🚫 WHAT TO AVOID

- Tell your prescriber before starting fluoxetine, paroxetine, an antifungal, or carbamazepine, since each shifts your level.
- Go easy on alcohol, which adds to the drowsiness and works against the mood improvement you are aiming for.
- Hold off on driving until you know how it affects you, especially in the first week after any dose change.
- In hot weather, take breaks and drink water, since this medicine makes it harder for your body to cool itself.
- Tell your prescriber if you are pregnant, may become pregnant, or are nursing, so the plan works for both of you.

① STOPPING IT SAFELY

- Do not stop **brexpiprazole** on your own. Depression and psychosis both tend to return, often weeks after the last dose.
- Because it leaves your body slowly, stopping feels fine at first, which is exactly why people quit and then slide back.
- Your prescriber can taper it or swap it for something else, and both are safer than simply not refilling it.
- If weight gain or restlessness is the problem, say so plainly. There are real fixes that do not mean going untreated.

❓ QUESTIONS TO ASK

- Do I keep taking my antidepressant while I am on this?
- How much weight gain should make us rethink this medicine?
- How will we tell restlessness apart from my anxiety?
- How long should I stay on it once I am feeling better?

Where this information comes from

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NOTE

Sources are listed in APA 7th edition style. This handout is general information about a medicine, not medical advice, and it does not replace the instructions from your own prescriber or pharmacist. Never start, change, or stop a medicine on your own. If you think you are having a serious reaction, call your prescriber; if you cannot breathe, cannot stay awake, or are thinking of harming yourself, call 911 or 988 right away.