

Vortioxetine

Trintellix, an antidepressant that acts on serotonin in several ways

Vortioxetine treats depression, and it is one of the few with real evidence for clearing mental fog.

WHAT IT TREATS

Depression in adults

HOW YOU TAKE IT

Once daily, any food

WHEN IT WORKS

1-2 weeks; fuller by 6-8

HABIT FORMING

No

⚠️ IMPORTANT SAFETY WARNING

Antidepressants can raise the risk of suicidal thoughts in people under **25**, mostly in the first weeks or after a dose change. Tell someone right away and call your prescriber. Do not stop the medicine on your own.

🕒 WHAT THIS MEDICINE DOES

- **Vortioxetine** is an antidepressant. It raises serotonin, a chemical that steadies mood, and nudges several serotonin switches directly.
- It is approved for depression in adults. It has not been shown to work in teenagers, so it is not used in that age group.
- In studies it improved thinking speed and focus, partly separate from mood. That is unusual among antidepressants.
- It is not habit forming. It works by building up steadily in your system, not by giving you a lift in the moment.

🕒 HOW TO TAKE IT

- Take it once a day at the same time. Morning or evening both work, so pick whichever you will actually remember.
- You can take it with or without food, but taking it with a meal cuts down on nausea in the first week or two.
- Swallow the tablet whole with water. There is no liquid version, so tell your pharmacist if pills are hard for you.
- If you miss a dose, take it when you remember that day. If it is nearly time for the next one, skip it. Never double up.
- Store it at room temperature and away from damp. Keep it somewhere you already look every morning.

📈 WHAT TO EXPECT

- Sleep, appetite, and energy often shift first, in about **1 to 2 weeks**. Mood and interest usually follow later.
- Give it **4 to 6 weeks** at a steady dose before you judge it. The fullest benefit can take 8 to 12 weeks.
- Side effects often arrive before the benefit does. That gap is the single most common reason people quit too early.
- If mental fog is your main complaint, watch for that specifically. Some people notice sharper focus before better mood.

💔 COMMON SIDE EFFECTS

- Nausea is by far the most common effect and it is worse at higher doses. Take it with food and it usually clears in two weeks.
- Constipation is common. More water, fiber, fruit, and daily movement handle it, and your pharmacist can suggest more.
- Dry mouth and dizziness happen often. Sip water, use sugar-free gum, and stand up slowly for the first few weeks.
- Vivid or odd dreams are common at first. They usually fade, but mention them if they are wrecking your sleep.
- Sexual side effects can happen and are more likely at higher doses. Say so, because there are real fixes available.
- Weight tends to stay steady on **vortioxetine**, even over a year, which is a genuine advantage over some options.

⚠️ CALL YOUR PRESCRIBER OR GET HELP RIGHT AWAY IF

- New or worse thoughts of suicide, especially early or after a dose change: call or text **988** now and tell someone today.
- Call **911** for agitation with fever, stiff muscles, a racing heart, or twitching. That can mean too much serotonin.
- Call your prescriber for new confusion, bad headache, or unsteadiness, especially in an older adult. Salt levels are fixable.
- Call your prescriber if you feel wired and sleepless for days, or if you bruise and bleed more easily than usual.

🚫 WHAT TO AVOID

- Skip alcohol, especially in the first weeks. It works against the medicine and makes sleep and low mood worse.
- Ask before any new medicine, herb, or supplement. St. John's wort can cut **vortioxetine** levels and waste months.
- Tell your prescriber about any other antidepressant you take. Some of them double your levels and need a dose change.
- Check before regular ibuprofen, naproxen, or aspirin. Together they raise your chance of stomach bleeding.
- Tell your prescriber if you are pregnant, nursing, or planning to be. There is less safety data on this newer medicine.

🛑 STOPPING IT SAFELY

- Never stop on your own, even when you feel great. Feeling well is the medicine working, not proof you are finished with it.
- Stopping suddenly can bring dizziness, headache, irritability, and broken sleep. Coming down in steps prevents most of it.
- Your prescriber will lower the dose gradually over weeks. That plan is made together, never decided on your own.
- Most people stay on it at least **6 to 12 months** after they feel well. Stopping early is the top reason symptoms return.

❓ QUESTIONS TO ASK

- How long should I give this before we decide whether it is working?
- Does this dose need to change because of my other medicines?
- What can we try if the nausea does not settle within a couple of weeks?
- Who do I call after hours if I start feeling worse instead of better?

Where this information comes from

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline. (2025). *Talk to someone now*. <https://988lifeline.org/>

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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.