PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Aripiprazole

This information from UpToDate® Lexidrug™ explains what you need to know about this medication, including what it's used for, how to take it, its side effects, and when to call your healthcare provider.

Brand Names: US

Abilify; Abilify Asimtufii; Abilify Maintena; Abilify MyCite Maintenance Kit [DSC]; Abilify MyCite Starter Kit [DSC]; Opipza

Brand Names: Canada

Abilify; Abilify Asimtufii; Abilify Maintena; AG-Aripiprazole; APO-ARIPiprazole; Auro-ARIPiprazole; JAMP-Aripiprazole; MINT-Aripiprazole; NRA-Aripiprazole; ODAN-Aripiprazole; PMS-ARIPiprazole; RIVA-ARIPiprazole; SANDOZ ARIPiprazole; Solufy

Warning

- Drugs like this one have raised the chance of suicidal thoughts or actions in children and young adults. The risk may be greater in people who have had these thoughts or actions in the past. All people who take this drug need to be watched closely. Call the doctor right away if signs like depression, nervousness, restlessness, grouchiness, panic attacks, or changes in mood or actions are new or worse. Call the doctor right away if any thoughts or actions of suicide occur.
- There is a higher chance of death in older adults who take this drug for mental problems caused by dementia. Most of the deaths were linked to heart disease or infection. This drug is not approved to treat mental problems caused by dementia.

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat schizophrenia.
- It is used to treat depression.
- It is used to treat bipolar disorder.
- It is used to treat certain behavior problems in patients with autism.
- It is used to treat Tourette's syndrome.
- It may be given to your child for other reasons. Talk with the doctor.

Tablets with sensor (Abilify MyCite):

- If your child has been given this form of this drug, talk with the doctor for information about the benefits and risks. Talk with the doctor if you have questions or concerns about giving this drug to your child.

What do I need to tell the doctor BEFORE my child takes this drug?

- If your child is allergic to this drug; any part of this drug; or any other drugs, foods, or substances. Tell the doctor about the allergy and what signs your child had.

This drug may interact with other drugs or health problems.

Tell the doctor and pharmacist about all of your child's drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins) and health problems. You must check to make sure that it is safe to give this drug with all of your child's other drugs and health problems. Do not start, stop, or change the dose of any drug your child takes without checking with the doctor.

What are some things I need to know or do while my child takes this drug?

All products:

- Tell all of your child's health care providers that your child is taking this drug. This includes your child's doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- Have your child avoid tasks or actions that call for alertness or clear eyesight until you see how this drug affects your child. These are things like riding a bike, playing sports, or using items such as scissors, lawnmowers, electric scooters, toy cars, or motorized vehicles.
- To lower the chance of feeling dizzy or passing out, have your child rise slowly if your child has been sitting or lying down. Have your child be careful going up and down stairs.
- Dizziness, sleepiness, and feeling less stable may happen with this drug. These may lead to falling, which can cause broken bones or other health problems.
- Have your child's blood work and other lab tests checked as you have been told by the doctor.
- High blood sugar or diabetes, high cholesterol, and weight gain have

happened with drugs like this one. These may raise the chance of heart and brain blood vessel disease.

- Check your child's blood sugar as you have been told by the doctor.
- If your child has phenylketonuria (PKU), talk with your child's doctor. Some products have phenylalanine.
- If your child is not able to break down sucrose or fructose, talk with your child's doctor. Some products have sucrose or fructose.
- Alcohol may interact with this drug. Be sure your child does not drink alcohol.
- Talk with your child's doctor before your child uses marijuana, other forms of cannabis, or prescription or OTC drugs that may slow your child's actions.
- Have your child be careful in hot weather or while your child is being active. Have your child drink lots of fluids to stop fluid loss.
- Have your child drink lots of noncaffeine liquids every day unless told to drink less liquid by your child's doctor.
- Chance of seizures may be higher. Talk with the doctor.

If your child is pregnant or breast-feeding a baby:

- Talk with the doctor if your child is pregnant, becomes pregnant, or is breast-feeding a baby. You will need to talk about the benefits and risks to your child and the baby.
- Taking this drug in the third trimester of pregnancy may lead to side effects or withdrawal in the newborn.
- If your child is breast-feeding a baby, the doctor will need to watch your child's baby for certain side effects.

What are some side effects that I need to call my child's doctor about right away?

WARNING/CAUTION: Even though it may be rare, some people may have very bad and sometimes deadly side effects when taking a drug. Tell your child's doctor or get medical help right away if your child has any of the following signs or symptoms that may be related to a very bad side effect:

- Signs of an allergic reaction, like rash; hives; itching; red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin with or without fever; wheezing; tightness in the chest or throat; trouble breathing, swallowing, or talking; unusual hoarseness; or swelling of the mouth, face, lips, tongue, or throat.
- Signs of high blood sugar like confusion, feeling sleepy, unusual thirst or hunger, passing urine more often, flushing, fast breathing, or breath that smells like fruit.
- Trouble controlling body movements, twitching, change in balance, trouble swallowing or speaking.
- Strong urges that are hard to control (such as eating, gambling, sex, or spending money).
- Severe dizziness or passing out.
- Change in balance.
- Seizures.
- Blurred eyesight.
- A very bad and sometimes deadly health problem called neuroleptic malignant syndrome (NMS) may happen. Call your child's doctor right away if your child has any fever, muscle cramps or stiffness, dizziness, very bad headache, confusion, change in thinking, fast heartbeat, heartbeat that does not feel normal, or is sweating a lot.
- Some people may get a severe muscle problem called tardive dyskinesia. This problem may lessen or go away after stopping this drug, but it may not go away. The risk is greater with diabetes and in older adults, especially older females. The risk is greater with longer use or higher doses, but it may also occur after short-term use with low doses. Call your child's doctor right

away if your child has trouble controlling body movements or problems with the tongue, face, mouth, or jaw like tongue sticking out, puffing cheeks, mouth puckering, or chewing.

- Low white blood cell counts have happened with drugs like this one. This may lead to a higher chance of infection. Rarely, infections have been deadly. Tell the doctor if your child has ever had a low white blood cell count. Call the doctor right away if your child has signs of infection like fever, chills, or sore throat.

What are some other side effects of this drug?

All drugs may cause side effects. However, many people have no side effects or only have minor side effects. Call your child's doctor or get medical help if any of these side effects or any other side effects bother your child or do not go away:

All products:

- Feeling dizzy, sleepy, tired, or weak.
- Anxiety.
- Headache.
- Upset stomach or throwing up.
- Weight gain.
- Restlessness.
- Constipation.
- Trouble sleeping.
- Appetite changes.
- Nose or throat irritation.
- Dry mouth.
- Shakiness.
- Drooling.
- Stuffy nose.

Injection:

- Pain where the shot was given.

These are not all of the side effects that may occur. If you have questions about side effects, call your child's doctor. Call your child's doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You may report side effects to your national health agency.

How is this drug best given?

Give this drug as ordered by your child's doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

All oral products:

- Give this drug with or without food.
- Keep giving this drug to your child as you have been told by your child's doctor or other health care provider, even if your child feels well.

Tablets:

- Have your child swallow whole. Do not let your child chew, break, or crush unless the doctor tells you otherwise.

Liquid:

- Measure liquid doses carefully. Use the measuring device that comes with this drug. If there is none, ask the pharmacist for a device to measure this drug.

Oral-disintegrating tablet:

- Do not push the tablet out of the foil when opening. Use dry hands to take it from the foil. Place on your child's tongue and let it dissolve. Water is not needed. Do not let your child swallow it whole. Do not let your child chew, break, or crush it.

Oral film:

- Do not remove this drug from the pouch until your child is ready to take it.
- Be sure your hands are dry before you touch this drug.
- Put film on tongue and let it dissolve. Water is not needed. If using more than 1 film, let each film dissolve all the way before using the next film.
- Have your child let the film dissolve all the way before swallowing it. Do not let your child chew or split the film. Do not let your child swallow the film whole.

Injection:

- It is given as a shot into a muscle.

What do I do if my child misses a dose?
All oral products:

- Give a missed dose as soon as you think about it.
- If it is close to the time for your child's next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your child's normal time.
- Do not give 2 doses at the same time or extra doses.

Injection:

- Call your child's doctor to find out what to do.

How do I store and/or throw out this drug?
All oral products:

- Store at room temperature in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.

Liquid:

- After opening, throw away any part not used after 6 months.

Oral-disintegrating tablet:

- Give oral-disintegrating tablet right after opening. Throw away any part of opened pouch that is not used.

Injection:

- If you need to store this drug at home, talk with your child's doctor, nurse, or pharmacist about how to store it.

All products:

- Keep all drugs in a safe place. Keep all drugs out of the reach of children and pets.
- Throw away unused or expired drugs. Do not flush down a toilet or pour down a drain unless you are told to do so. Check with your pharmacist if you have questions about the best way to throw out drugs. There may be drug take-back programs in your area.

General drug facts

- If your child's symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your child's doctor.
- Do not share your child's drug with others and do not give anyone else's drug to your child.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your child's doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.
- If you think there has been an overdose, call your poison control center or get medical care right away. Be ready to tell or show what was taken, how much, and when it happened.

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This generalized information is a limited summary of diagnosis, treatment, and/or medication information. It is not meant to be comprehensive and should be used as a tool to help the user understand and/or assess potential diagnostic and treatment options. It does NOT include all information about conditions, treatments, medications, side effects, or risks that may apply to a specific patient. It is not intended to be medical advice or a substitute for the medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment of a health care provider based on the health care provider's examination and assessment of a patient's specific and unique circumstances. Patients must speak with a health care provider for complete information about their health, medical questions, and treatment options, including any risks or benefits regarding use of medications. This information does not endorse any treatments or medications as safe, effective, or approved for treating a specific patient. UpToDate, Inc. and its affiliates disclaim any warranty or liability relating to this information or the use thereof. The use of this information is governed by the Terms of Use, available at https://www.wolterskluwer.com/en/know/clinical-effectiveness-terms.

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If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

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