PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Paroxetine

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

Paxil; Paxil CR; Pexeva [DSC]

Brand Names: Canada

AG-Paroxetine; APO-PARoxetine; Auro-PARoxetine; BIO-PARoxetine; JAMP-PARoxetine; M-Paroxetine; Mar-PARoxetine; MINT-Paroxetine; NRA-Paroxetine; Paxil; Paxil CR; PMS-PARoxetine; PRO-Paroxetine; RIVA-PARoxetine; SANDOZ PARoxetine; TARO-PARoxetine; TEVA-PARoxetine

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.
- This drug is not approved for use in children. Talk with the doctor.

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat depression.
- It is used to treat obsessive-compulsive problems.
- It is used to treat panic attacks.
- It is used to treat anxiety.
- It is used to treat post-traumatic stress.
- It may be given to your child for other reasons. Talk with the doctor.

If your child has menstrual periods:

- It is used to treat mood problems caused by monthly periods.

Capsules:

- 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.
- If your child has narrow-angle glaucoma.
- If your child is taking any of these drugs: Linezolid, methylene blue, pimozide, or thioridazine.
- If your child has taken certain drugs for depression or certain other health problems in the last 14 days. This includes isocarboxazid, phenelzine, or tranylcypromine. Very high blood pressure may happen.
- If your child is taking any drugs that can cause a certain type of heartbeat that is not normal (prolonged QT interval). There are many drugs that can do

this. Ask the doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure.

This is not a list of all drugs or health problems that interact with this drug.

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?

- 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 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.
- Do not stop giving this drug to your child all of a sudden without calling the doctor. Your child may have a greater risk of side effects. If your child needs to stop this drug, you will want to slowly stop it as told by the doctor.
- 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.
- It may take several weeks to see the full effects.
- This drug may raise the chance of a broken bone. Talk with the doctor.
- This drug may raise the chance of bleeding. Sometimes, bleeding can be life-threatening. Talk with the doctor.
- If your child has bipolar disorder, manic episodes may happen while taking this drug. Call the doctor if your child has signs of a manic episode.
- Some people may have a higher chance of eye problems with this drug. The

doctor may want your child to have an eye exam to see if your child has a higher chance of these eye problems. Call the doctor right away if your child has eye pain, change in eyesight, or swelling or redness in or around the eye.

- This drug can cause low sodium levels. Very low sodium levels can be life-threatening, leading to seizures, passing out, trouble breathing, or death.
- This drug may affect growth in children and teens in some cases. They may need regular growth checks. Talk with the doctor.
- This drug may affect being able to father a child. It is not known if this effect will go back to normal.

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

- Tell the doctor if your child is pregnant, may be pregnant, or plans to get pregnant while taking this drug. You will need to talk about the benefits and risks to your child and the baby. Taking this drug in the first trimester of pregnancy may raise the risk of birth defects (mainly heart defects) in the unborn baby. Taking this drug in the third trimester of pregnancy may raise your child's risk of bleeding after delivery and may lead to some health problems in the newborn.
- Tell the doctor if your child is breast-feeding a baby. You will need to talk about any risks to the baby.

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 low sodium levels like headache, trouble focusing, memory

problems, feeling confused, weakness, seizures, or change in balance.

- Signs of infection like fever, chills, very bad sore throat, ear or sinus pain, cough, more sputum or change in color of sputum, pain with passing urine, mouth sores, or wound that will not heal.
- Signs of bleeding like throwing up or coughing up blood; vomit that looks like coffee grounds; blood in the urine; black, red, or tarry stools; bleeding from the gums; abnormal vaginal bleeding; bruises without a cause or that get bigger; or bleeding you cannot stop.
- Signs of a very bad skin reaction (Stevens-Johnson syndrome/toxic epidermal necrolysis) like red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin (with or without fever); red or irritated eyes; or sores in the mouth, throat, nose, or eyes.
- Severe dizziness or passing out.
- A type of abnormal heartbeat (prolonged QT interval) has happened with this drug. This can be severe or lead to sudden death. The chance may be raised if your child also takes other drugs that can cause a prolonged QT interval. Call the doctor right away if your child has a fast or abnormal heartbeat, dizziness, or if your child passes out.
- Bone pain.
- Seizures.
- A big weight loss.
- A burning, numbness, or tingling feeling that is not normal.
- Painful erection (hard penis) or an erection that lasts for longer than 4 hours.
- A severe and sometimes deadly problem called serotonin syndrome may happen. The risk may be greater if your child also takes certain other drugs. Call your child's doctor right away if your child has agitation; change in balance; confusion; hallucinations; fever; a fast or abnormal heartbeat; flushing; muscle twitching or stiffness; seizures; shivering or shaking; sweating a lot; severe diarrhea, upset stomach, or throwing up; or very bad headache.

If your child is or may be sexually active:

- Sex problems may happen with this drug. This includes decreased sex drive, trouble having an orgasm, ejaculation problems, or trouble getting or keeping an erection. In some cases, these problems have continued after stopping this drug. If you have any questions or concerns, talk with the doctor.

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:

- Feeling dizzy, sleepy, tired, or weak.
- Headache.
- Constipation, diarrhea, stomach pain, upset stomach, throwing up, or decreased appetite.
- Gas.
- Feeling nervous and excitable.
- Dry mouth.
- Trouble sleeping.
- Shakiness.
- Yawning.
- Back pain.
- Sweating.

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 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.
- Give this drug in the morning unless the doctor tells you otherwise.

Liquid (suspension):

- Shake well before use.
- 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.

All tablet products:

- Some brands of this drug may need to be swallowed whole. Check with the doctor or pharmacist if you have questions about whether your child's brand must be swallowed whole.

What do I do if my child misses a dose?

- 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.

How do I store and/or throw out this drug?

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

Consumer Information Use and Disclaimer

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,

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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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