PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Modafinil

This information from Lexicomp® 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
Provigil

Brand Names: Canada
Alertec; APO-Modafinil; Auro-Modafinil; BIO-Modafinil; JAMP Modafinil; Mar-Modafinil; TEVA-Modafinil

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat a lot of sleepiness that may happen with sleep apnea, narcolepsy, or shift work problems.
- It may be given to you for other reasons. Talk with the doctor.

What do I need to tell my doctor BEFORE I take this drug?

- If you are allergic to this drug; any part of this drug; or any other drugs, foods, or substances. Tell your doctor about the allergy and what signs you had.
- If you have ever had a rash when taking this drug or a drug like it.
- If you have heart problems.
- If you have heart valve problems.

This is not a list of all drugs or health problems that interact with this drug.
Tell your doctor and pharmacist about all of your drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins) and health problems. You must check to make sure that it is safe for you to take this drug with all of your drugs and health problems. Do not start, stop, or change the dose of any drug without checking with your doctor.

What are some things I need to know or do while I take this drug?

- Tell all of your health care providers that you take this drug. This includes your doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- This drug is not a cure for sleep problems and does not replace sleep. Stay under the care of your doctor.
- Avoid driving and doing other tasks or actions that call for you to be alert until you see how this drug affects you. You may also need to avoid doing these things if you do not feel awake enough after taking this drug. If you still feel sleepy after taking this drug, talk with your doctor.
- This drug may be habit-forming with long-term use.
- Check blood pressure and heart rate as the doctor has told you.
- You may need to have some heart tests before starting this drug. If you have questions, talk with your doctor.
- Avoid drinking alcohol while taking this drug.
- Mental or mood problems like depression and suicidal thoughts have happened with this drug. Sometimes, people needed to get treated in a hospital. If you have ever had any mental or mood problems, talk with your doctor.
- A severe and sometimes deadly reaction has happened. Most of the time, this reaction has signs like fever, rash, or swollen glands with problems in body organs like the liver, kidney, blood, heart, muscles and joints, or lungs. If you have questions, talk with the doctor.
- Limit your use of caffeine (for example, tea, coffee, cola) and chocolate. Use with this drug may cause nervousness, shakiness, and a fast heartbeat.
If you are 65 or older, use this drug with care. You could have more side effects.

This drug is not approved for use in children. The chance of very bad and sometimes deadly skin reactions like Stevens-Johnson syndrome may be raised in children. However, your child’s doctor may decide the benefits of taking this drug may outweigh the risks. Talk with the doctor if you have questions about giving this drug to your child.

Birth control pills and other hormone-based birth control may not work as well to prevent pregnancy. Use some other kind of birth control also, like a condom, when taking this drug and for 1 month after the last dose.

Tell your doctor if you are pregnant, plan on getting pregnant, or are breast-feeding. You will need to talk about the benefits and risks to you and the baby.

What are some side effects that I need to call my 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 doctor or get medical help right away if you have 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 depression, thoughts of suicide, nervousness, emotional ups and downs, thinking that is not normal, anxiety, or lack of interest in life.

- Signs of heart problems like chest pain, fast heartbeat, a heartbeat that does not feel normal, or shortness of breath.

- Signs of high blood pressure like very bad headache or dizziness, passing out, or change in eyesight.

- Hallucinations (seeing or hearing things that are not there).

- Change in how you act.
- Feeling confused.
- Swollen gland.
- Fever, chills, or sore throat; any unexplained bruising or bleeding; or feeling very tired or weak.
- Swelling in the arms or legs.
- Dark urine or yellow skin or eyes.
- Not able to pass urine or change in how much urine is passed.
- Muscle or joint pain.
- A severe skin reaction (Stevens-Johnson syndrome/toxic epidermal necrolysis) may happen. It can cause severe health problems that may not go away, and sometimes death. Get medical help right away if you have signs like red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin (with or without fever); red or irritated eyes; or sores in your mouth, throat, nose, or eyes.

**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 doctor or get medical help if any of these side effects or any other side effects bother you or do not go away:

- Feeling nervous and excitable.
- Dizziness or headache.
- Diarrhea.
- Trouble sleeping.
- Back pain.
- Upset stomach.
- Runny or stuffy nose.

These are not all of the side effects that may occur. If you have questions about side effects, call your doctor. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects.
You may report side effects to your national health agency.

You may report side effects to the FDA at 1-800-332-1088. You may also report side effects at https://www.fda.gov/medwatch.

**How is this drug best taken?**

Use this drug as ordered by your doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

- Take with or without food.
- If taken with food, this drug may take longer to work.
- Shift work sleep problem: Take 1 hour before the start of work.
- Narcolepsy and sleep apnea: Take this drug in the morning.

**What do I do if I miss a dose?**

- Take a missed dose as soon as you think about it.
- If it is near bedtime, skip the missed dose and go back to your normal time.
- Do not take 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.
- Store this drug in a safe place where children cannot see or reach it, and where other people cannot get to it. A locked box or area may help keep this drug safe. Keep all drugs away from 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 symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your doctor.

- Do not share your drugs with others and do not take anyone else’s drugs.

- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.

- This drug comes with an extra patient fact sheet called a Medication Guide. Read it with care. Read it again each time this drug is refilled. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with the doctor, 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 information should not be used to decide whether or not to take this medicine or any other medicine. Only the healthcare provider has the knowledge and training to decide which medicines are right for a specific patient. This information does not endorse any medicine as safe, effective, or approved for treating any patient or health condition. This is only a brief summary of general information about this medicine. It does NOT include all information about the possible uses, directions, warnings, precautions, interactions, adverse effects, or risks that may apply to this medicine. This information is not specific medical advice and does not replace information you receive from the healthcare provider. You must talk with the healthcare provider for complete information about the risks and benefits of using this medicine. The use of this information is governed by the Lexicomp End User License Agreement, available at https://www.wolterskluwer.com/en/solutions/lexicomp/about/eula.
If you have any questions, contact a member of your healthcare team directly. If you're a patient at MSK and you need to reach a provider after 5:00 PM, during the weekend, or on a holiday, call 212-639-2000.

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