

Uses

Aripiprazole is used to treat certain mental/mood disorders (such as bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, Tourette's syndrome, and irritability associated with autistic disorder). It may also be used in combination with other medication to treat depression. Aripiprazole is known as an antipsychotic drug (atypical type). It works by helping to restore the balance of certain natural chemicals in the brain (neurotransmitters).

This medication can decrease hallucinations and improve your concentration. It helps you to think more clearly and positively about yourself, feel less nervous, and take a more active part in everyday life. Aripiprazole can treat severe mood swings and decrease how often mood swings occur.

How to use Aripiprazole

Read the Medication Guide and, if available, the Patient Information Leaflet provided by your pharmacist before you start taking aripiprazole and each time you get a refill. If you have any questions, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

Take this medication by mouth with or without food as directed by your doctor, usually once daily. The dosage is based on your medical condition, response to treatment, age, and other medications you may be taking. Be sure to tell your doctor and pharmacist about all the products you use (including prescription drugs, nonprescription drugs, and herbal products). To reduce your risk of side effects, your doctor may direct you to start this medication at a low dose and gradually increase your dose. Follow your doctor's instructions carefully.

The manufacturer directs to swallow this medication whole. However, many similar drugs (immediate-release tablets) can be split/crushed. Follow your doctor's direction on how to take this medication.

If you are using the liquid form of this medication, carefully measure the dose using a special measuring device/cup. Do not use a household spoon because you may not get the correct dose.

Do not increase your dose or use this drug more often or for longer than prescribed. Your condition will not improve any faster, and your risk of side effects will increase.

It may take several weeks before you get the full benefit of this drug. Use this medication regularly to get the most benefit from it. To help you remember, take it at the same time each day.

Keep taking this medication even if you feel well. Do not stop taking this medication without consulting your doctor. Some conditions may become worse when this drug is suddenly stopped. Your dose may need to be gradually decreased.

Side Effects

See also Warning section.

Dizziness, lightheadedness, drowsiness, nausea, vomiting, tiredness, excess saliva/drooling, blurred vision, weight gain, constipation, headache, and trouble sleeping may occur. If any of these effects persist or worsen, tell your doctor or pharmacist promptly.

Dizziness and lightheadedness can increase the risk of falling. Get up slowly when rising from a sitting or lying position.

Remember that your doctor has prescribed this medication because he or she has judged that the benefit to you is greater than the risk of side effects. Many people using this medication do not have serious side effects.

Tell your doctor right away if you have any serious side effects, including: fainting, mental/mood changes (such as increased anxiety, depression, suicidal thoughts), trouble swallowing, restlessness (especially in the legs), shaking (tremor), muscle spasm, mask-like expression of the face, seizures, trouble controlling certain urges (such as gambling, sex, eating

Precautions

See also Warning section.

Before taking aripiprazole, tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are allergic to it; or if you have any other allergies. This product may contain inactive ingredients (such as propylene glycol), which can cause allergic reactions or other problems. Talk to your pharmacist for more details.

Before using this medication, tell your doctor or pharmacist your medical history, especially of: problems with blood flow in the brain (such as cerebrovascular disease, stroke), diabetes (including family history), heart problems (such as low blood pressure, coronary artery disease, heart failure, irregular heartbeat), nervous system problems (such as dementia, NMS, seizures), obesity, low white blood cell count (including history of low white blood cell count caused by medications), swallowing problems, breathing trouble during sleep (sleep apnea).

This drug may make you dizzy or drowsy or blur your vision. Alcohol or marijuana (cannabis) can make you more dizzy or drowsy. Do not drive, use machinery, or do anything that needs alertness or clear vision until you can do it safely. Avoid alcoholic beverages. Talk to your doctor if you are using marijuana (cannabis)

Interactions

Drug interactions may change how your medications work or increase your risk for serious side effects. This document does not contain all possible drug interactions. Keep a list of all the products you use (including prescription/nonprescription drugs and herbal products) and share it with your doctor and pharmacist. Do not start, stop, or change the dosage of any medicines without your doctor's approval.

A product that may interact with this drug is: metoclopramide.

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking other products that cause drowsiness such as opioid pain or cough relievers (such as codeine, hydrocodone), alcohol, marijuana (cannabis), drugs for sleep or anxiety (such as alprazolam, lorazepam, zolpidem), muscle relaxants (such as carisoprodol, cyclobenzaprine), or antihistamines (such as cetirizine, diphenhydramine).

Check the labels on all your medicines (such as allergy or cough-and-cold products) because they may contain ingredients that cause drowsiness. Ask your pharmacist about using those products safely.