

Strattera (Atomoxetine) — Patient Information Handout

What is Strattera?

Strattera (atomoxetine) is a non-stimulant prescription medication used to treat Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) in children 6 years and older and in adults. It works by increasing the level of a natural chemical called norepinephrine in the brain, which helps improve attention, focus, and impulse control.

Strattera is not a controlled substance and is not habit-forming. It is meant to be used as part of a complete treatment program that may also include counseling, behavioral therapy, and educational support.

How to Take Strattera

- Take Strattera exactly as prescribed by your doctor. Do not change your dose without talking to your doctor first.
 - Strattera may be taken with or without food.
 - It is usually taken once a day in the morning, or split into two doses — one in the morning and one in the late afternoon or early evening.
 - Swallow capsules whole. Do not open, crush, or chew them. If a capsule is accidentally opened, avoid touching the powder and wash your hands right away. If the powder gets in your eyes, rinse them with water immediately and contact your doctor.
 - If you miss a dose, take it as soon as you remember. If it is close to the time of your next dose, skip the missed dose. Do not take two doses at the same time.
 - It may take several weeks before you feel the full benefit of this medication. Do not stop taking it without talking to your doctor.
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Common Side Effects

The following side effects are common and often improve over time:

- Upset stomach, nausea, or vomiting
- Decreased appetite
- Stomach pain
- Tiredness or drowsiness
- Headache
- Dry mouth
- Constipation
- Dizziness
- Mood swings

Tell your doctor if any of these side effects bother you or do not go away.

Serious Side Effects — Contact Your Doctor Right Away If You Experience:

- **Thoughts of suicide or self-harm:** Strattera carries an FDA boxed warning about a small increased risk of suicidal thoughts in children and teenagers. Watch for new or worsening anxiety, agitation, panic attacks, irritability, hostility, aggression, restlessness, or depression — especially in the first few months of treatment or after a dose change. Family members and caregivers should monitor daily for these changes.
- **Liver problems:** Although rare, serious liver injury has been reported. Seek immediate medical attention if you notice yellowing of the skin or eyes (jaundice), dark urine, itching, pain in the upper right area of your stomach, or unexplained flu-like symptoms.
- **Heart problems:** Strattera can raise blood pressure and heart rate. Tell your doctor right away if you have chest pain, shortness of breath, or fainting.

- **Signs of mania:** Unusually high energy, racing thoughts, reckless behavior, feeling extremely happy or irritable, or talking more than usual.
 - **Priapism:** A painful or prolonged erection lasting more than 4 hours requires immediate medical attention.
 - **Severe allergic reaction:** Swelling of the face, lips, tongue, or throat; hives; or difficulty breathing.
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Who Should NOT Take Strattera?

Do not take Strattera if you:

- Are allergic to atomoxetine or any ingredient in Strattera
 - Are taking or have recently taken (within the past 14 days) a monoamine oxidase inhibitor (MAOI), such as phenelzine (Nardil), tranylcypromine (Parnate), or selegiline (Emsam)
 - Have narrow-angle glaucoma
 - Have a pheochromocytoma (a tumor of the adrenal gland) or a history of one
 - Have a severe heart or blood vessel condition that could worsen with increases in blood pressure or heart rate
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Drug Interactions

Tell your doctor about all medications you take, including prescription drugs, over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. Strattera may interact with:

- MAO inhibitors (must not be used within 14 days of Strattera)
 - Certain antidepressants such as fluoxetine (Prozac) or paroxetine (Paxil), which can increase the amount of Strattera in your body
 - Blood pressure medications
 - Albuterol and other beta-2 agonist inhalers (may increase heart rate and blood pressure when used with Strattera)
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Important Reminders

- Keep all follow-up appointments with your doctor. Blood pressure and heart rate should be checked regularly.
 - Store Strattera at room temperature, away from moisture and heat.
 - Keep this medication out of the reach of children.
 - Do not share Strattera with anyone else, even if they have similar symptoms.
 - If you are pregnant, planning to become pregnant, or breastfeeding, talk to your doctor before taking Strattera.
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When to Seek Emergency Help

Go to the nearest emergency room or call 911 if you experience:

- Thoughts of hurting yourself or suicide
 - Chest pain, fainting, or a very fast heartbeat
 - Yellowing of the skin or eyes with stomach pain
 - A painful erection lasting more than 4 hours
 - Signs of a severe allergic reaction (swelling, hives, trouble breathing)
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This handout is for informational purposes and does not replace the advice of your doctor. Always follow your doctor's instructions regarding your medication.