

Risperidone *(say ris-speer-add-own)*

What is risperidone?

This medicine is a type of antipsychotic (*say an-tee-sy-kot-ick*). It is most commonly used to treat symptoms of psychosis (*say sigh-ko-sis*) such as hearing voices or false beliefs.

Psychosis can occur in different types of illnesses such as schizophrenia and bipolar disorder.

Risperidone can also be used to treat other types of illnesses (such as mania or depression) without psychosis.

You are taking this medicine for:

- Schizophrenia
- Bipolar Disorder
- Other: _____

How does risperidone work?

Schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and other types of illnesses can happen when the chemicals in your brain are out-of-balance.

Risperidone works by restoring the balance of the brain's chemicals. This can help reduce:

- Hallucinations - feeling unusual body sensations; hearing, seeing, smelling or tasting things that are not real
- Delusions - feeling that someone is following you or trying to hurt you; feeling that people are talking about you; or feeling that you have special powers or are famous

Risperidone can also:

- help improve your mood
- help you sleep better
- help you feel calmer and less fearful
- help you have less harmful thoughts
- help you think more clearly and concentrate better

How quickly will it start working?

Some of your symptoms might get better before others.

- Over the first few weeks, you might find that you sleep better and have fewer mood changes.
- Over the next 2 to 8 weeks, hallucinations or delusions fade away and your thoughts become clearer.
- Other symptoms like having no interest in yourself or others might continue to get better over 6 months or more.

How do I take risperidone?

- Take risperidone regularly as prescribed.
- You can take it with or without food.
- Do not mix risperidone liquid with cola or tea.
- If you miss a dose, take it as soon as possible.
- If it is almost time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and return to your regular schedule. Do not take 2 doses at the same time.

Why is it important to keep taking it?

- Always take the amount you are supposed to take (the dose written on the prescription label).
Do not change how much you take.
Do not stop taking it without talking to your prescriber.
- If you do not take it as prescribed, the amount of risperidone in your body can get too low, making it not work as well to treat your symptoms.

What should I look out for?

Here are some possible side effects and what to do if you notice them.

Common Side Effects



a) Blurred vision

Can happen in the first 1 to 2 weeks and should go away over time.



b) Dizzy

Take your time getting up from a sitting or lying position.

Keep well hydrated by drinking fluids. Water is best. Limit how much alcohol you drink.



c) Drowsy

Take this medicine at bedtime to reduce daytime drowsiness. Caution: It is dangerous to drive or operate machinery when drowsy.



d) Weight gain

Choose healthy foods and exercise regularly. Drink water, instead of sugary beverages.



e) Increased cholesterol or blood sugar

Your prescriber will monitor your cholesterol and blood sugar and adjust your medicines as needed. Healthy foods and exercise can help decrease cholesterol and blood sugar.



f) Too much prolactin

(a hormone normally in your body)

Speak to your prescriber or pharmacist if:

- You have irregular periods or your breasts are producing milk (for women).
- You have little or no interest in sex, breast pain, or your breasts get larger (for men and women)



g) Unusual body movements – called extrapyramidal (say *extra-per-ah-mid- al*) symptoms

Let your prescriber know if:

- You feel restless, fidgety, or cannot stay still (called akathisia - say *ak-ah-thee-zee-ah*)
- Your hands shake, or your body feels stiff and slow (called Parkinsonism -say *park-in-so-niz-im*)

Rare but Serious Side Effects

1. Blood clot

Antipsychotics can increase the chances of blood clots.

Early symptoms include swelling, pain, redness, warmth of one leg.

Serious symptoms include shortness of breath, chest pain, fainting, or weakness to one half of the body.

2. Neuroleptic Malignant Syndrome

Any antipsychotic can cause this very rare side effect.

Symptoms include a very high fever, sweating, fast heartbeat, breathing fast, changes in blood pressure, rigid or stiff muscles, and confusion.

When should I get help?

See your prescriber as soon as possible if you notice any of the following:

- Your symptoms are getting worse or returning.
- You are feeling hopeless, or you feel that there is no way to solve the problem or end the pain.
- Any of the common side effects do not go away or gets worse.

Go to the nearest Emergency Department if any of these happen:

- You feel like acting on thoughts of harming yourself or others.
- You notice any of the early symptoms of a blood clot.

Call 911 if you have any of the following:

- any serious symptoms of a blood clot
- any symptoms of neuroleptic malignant syndrome

What else should I know?

Other medicines can change how risperidone works.

Always check with your prescriber or pharmacist before taking any new medicines, including medicines you get with or without a prescription, herbal medicines, and supplements.

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It's good to ask questions

Anytime you have any questions or concerns about taking this medicine, talk with one of your healthcare team.

Call 811 (HealthLinkBC) after hours, and for any other health or medicine advice.

HealthLinkBC is open 24 hours a day and available in 130 languages. For an interpreter, say your language in English. Wait until an interpreter comes on the phone.

This information does not replace the advice given to you by your healthcare provider.