

Amitriptyline

Amitriptyline is a tricyclic antidepressant (TCA) with analgesic, sedative, and anticholinergic properties. It is widely used for both psychiatric and non-psychiatric conditions.

Classification

- **Class:** Tricyclic antidepressant (TCA)
- **ATC code:** N06AA09

Mechanism of Action

- Inhibits reuptake of **serotonin (5-HT)** and **norepinephrine (NE)** in the central nervous system.
- Blocks **muscarinic**, **histaminergic (H1)**, and **alpha-adrenergic** receptors, contributing to its side effects.

Indications

- **Major depressive disorder**
- **Neuropathic pain** (e.g., diabetic neuropathy, postherpetic neuralgia)
- **Chronic tension-type headache** and **migraine prophylaxis**
- **Fibromyalgia**
- **Irritable bowel syndrome** (off-label)
- **Tinnitus-related anxiety or depression** (off-label)

Dosage (Typical)

- Starting: 10-25 mg at bedtime
- Titration: Increase gradually based on response
- Max: 150-300 mg/day (lower in elderly or for non-psychiatric uses)

Adverse Effects

- **Common:** Dry mouth, constipation, urinary retention, sedation, weight gain, dizziness
- **Serious:** Cardiac arrhythmias, QT prolongation, seizures, orthostatic hypotension
- **Toxicity:** Narrow therapeutic index; risk of fatal overdose due to cardiac toxicity

Contraindications

- Recent **myocardial infarction**
- **Arrhythmias**
- Concurrent **MAO inhibitor** therapy
- **Angle-closure glaucoma**

Monitoring

- ECG in patients >40 years or with cardiac history
- Monitor for **anticholinergic toxicity**
- Assess for suicidal ideation, especially early in treatment

Clinical Notes

- Effective at **low doses** (10–50 mg) for pain and sleep-related symptoms
- Sedative effect useful in patients with **insomnia**
- Use with caution in **elderly** due to anticholinergic burden

Synonyms and Brand Names

- **Brand names:** Elavil®, Tryptizol®, Saroten®
- **Generic:** Amitriptyline hydrochloride

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