

# Sertraline

Sertraline is a **selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor (SSRI)** used primarily in the treatment of depression, anxiety disorders, and related psychiatric conditions. It is also used off-label in some somatic conditions like tinnitus or premature ejaculation.

## Classification

- **Drug class:** Antidepressant – SSRI
- **ATC code:** N06AB06

## Mechanism of Action

- Selectively inhibits the **presynaptic reuptake of serotonin (5-HT)** in the central nervous system.
- Increases extracellular serotonin levels → enhances serotonergic neurotransmission.
- Minimal effect on norepinephrine and dopamine reuptake.

## Indications

- **Major depressive disorder (MDD)**
- **Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD)** – including pediatric patients
- **Panic disorder**
- **Social anxiety disorder**
- **Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)**
- **Premenstrual dysphoric disorder (PMDD)**
- **Off-label:** tinnitus-related anxiety or distress

## Dosage (Adults)

- Starting dose: **50 mg/day**
- Titration: Increase by 50 mg every few weeks if tolerated
- Maximum: **200 mg/day**
- Takes **2-4 weeks** to observe therapeutic effect

## Adverse Effects

- **Common:** Nausea, insomnia, headache, diarrhea, sexual dysfunction, dry mouth
- **Less common:** Anxiety, tremor, sweating, weight changes
- **Serious:** Suicidality in young adults, serotonin syndrome, hyponatremia (SIADH), QT prolongation (rare)

## Contraindications

- Concomitant use with **MAO inhibitors** (risk of serotonin syndrome)
- Known hypersensitivity to sertraline
- Use with **pimozide** (QT risk)

## Warnings and Precautions

- Monitor for **suicidal ideation** (especially in adolescents and young adults)
- Taper gradually when discontinuing to avoid **withdrawal symptoms** (e.g., dizziness, irritability, paresthesias)
- Caution in **hepatic impairment** – dose adjustment may be needed

## Drug Interactions

- **Serotonergic drugs:** Risk of serotonin syndrome
- **NSAIDs, anticoagulants:** Increased bleeding risk
- **CYP2D6 inhibitors/inducers:** May affect metabolism

## Clinical Notes

- Better tolerated than older antidepressants (e.g., TCAs, MAOIs)
- Often preferred in patients with **comorbid anxiety**
- Does **not cause sedation or weight gain** as frequently as some other SSRIs

## Synonyms and Brand Names

- **Brand names:** Zoloft®, Serlain®, Altruline®
- **Generic name:** Sertraline hydrochloride

## Related Topics

- [Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors](#)
- [Antidepressants overview](#)
- [Tinnitus management](#)

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