

Medication Information Sheet



Milnacipran

brands: Savella®

Medications are only ONE part of a successful treatment plan. They are appropriate when they provide benefit, improve function and have either no or mild, manageable side effects. Importantly, medications (even if natural) are chemical substances not expected in the body, and as such have side effects. Some of the side effects might be unknown. The use of medications/drugs for any purpose requires patient consent. This practice does NOT require a patient to use any medication.

Information & potential benefits

Milnacipran is a unique medication. It is the only medication currently available in the United States that is FDA approved for fibromyalgia and for no other condition. This drug focuses on the pain component of those other medications and is the only drug in existence that has a fibromyalgia pain indication as its only clinical indication. The medication works by helping to prevent the destruction of norepinephrine and serotonin, two natural brain chemicals involved in pain transmission.

Potential risks and side effects

Milnacipran may cause weight loss. Importantly, like all medications based on anti-seizure or anti-depressant medications, there is a suicide warning. This is rare, but all patients should be aware of the risk and should let the prescribing provider know immediately of any worsening of depression. This medication, like most, should not be used with MAO inhibitors. Fortunately, there are few drug interactions, but they include: epinephrine, serotonin, digoxin, clonidine and clomipramine. The medication can increase blood pressure so you should monitor this with your primary provider. The medication may increase the risk of bleeding.

Dosing information

Like many similar medications, milnaciprin is gradually increased from a low dose. Personal clinical experience suggests titrating slowly to help reduce the chance of nausea when first starting the medication. This medication may take up to 8 weeks before benefit is appreciated.

Important information

Disclaimer: This is for informational purposes only. This does not replace the instructions you received from your provider, does not constitute initiation of medical treatment or establishment of a patient-physician relationship, does not constitute any form of recommendation, prescription or medical advice, and does not imply that the medication is appropriate or FDA approved for any condition. This information is not a complete listing of instructions, doses, uses or side effects. If this was prescribed to you, you must review this information with your pharmacist and prescriber before starting the medication. Any medication may interfere with the ability to drive, concentrate or operate machinery; patients must be responsible for their own behavior and should not engage in any dangerous activity if there is any question of impairment. All medications have side effects and drug interactions, some serious, some fatal. Let all of your practitioners and pharmacists know about every substance used. Alcohol, herbals or illegal drugs are not considered safe with these medications. Assume no medication is safe during pregnancy or while breast feeding. The medication may interfere with birth control. Almost any medication can cause sleepiness, insomnia, dizziness, confusion, hallucinations, anxiety, panic, constipation or diarrhea, headache, chest pain and nausea or vomiting, among others. Most medications should NOT be stopped suddenly because of the risk of withdrawal.