



Getting the Most from Your New Medicine: NHS New Medicines Service

You have received this leaflet as your pharmacist has recently spoken with you regarding your newly prescribed medicines. Please use this leaflet for support, your local community pharmacist is always happy to support with any questions you may have.

Sertraline

What is it used for?

Sertraline is used to treat depression, anxiety disorders, panic disorder and obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD). It helps improve mood, reduce anxiety and restore normal daily functioning.

How should I take it?

Sertraline is usually taken once daily. It can be taken with or without food. Try to take it at the same time each day. Some people prefer to take it in the morning if it affects sleep.

How does the drug work?

Sertraline belongs to a group of medicines called SSRIs (selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors). It works by increasing serotonin in the brain, a chemical involved in regulating mood and anxiety.

What can I expect when starting this medicine?

It can take 2–4 weeks before you notice an improvement in symptoms, and sometimes up to 6 weeks for the full benefit. Some mild side effects can occur early on but often settle after the first 2 weeks.

What are some common side effects?

Nausea, headache, sleep disturbance, diarrhoea or feeling more anxious initially. These usually improve as your body adjusts.

Other important advice

Do not stop taking sertraline suddenly without medical advice. If you have concerns about side effects or your symptoms are worsening, contact your pharmacist or doctor.

If you have any questions

Your community pharmacist is here to help. If you have any questions or concerns about your new medicine, your local pharmacy is available to answer any questions:

