

Ativan®

lorazepam tablets

Consumer Medicine Information (CMI)

What is in this leaflet

This leaflet answers some common questions about ATIVAN. It does not contain all of the available information.

It does not take the place of talking to your doctor or pharmacist.

All medicines have risks and benefits. Your doctor has weighed the risks of you taking ATIVAN against the benefits this medicine is expected to have for you.

Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you have any concerns about taking this medicine.

Keep this leaflet with the medicine.

You may need to read it again.

What ATIVAN is used for

ATIVAN contains lorazepam as the active ingredient which belongs to a group of medicines called benzodiazepines. They are thought to work by their action on brain chemicals.

ATIVAN is used to relieve anxiety. However anxiety or tension associated with the normal stress of everyday life usually does not require treatment with medicines.

It is also used before surgery to help relax you.

In general, benzodiazepines such as ATIVAN should be taken for short periods only (for example 2-4 weeks). Continuous long term use is not recommended unless advised by your doctor. The use of

benzodiazepines may lead to dependence on the medicine.

Ask your doctor if you have any questions about why ATIVAN has been prescribed for you.

Your doctor may have prescribed it for another purpose.

This medicine is available only with a doctor's prescription.

Before you take it

When you must not take it

Do not take ATIVAN if:

- you are allergic to:**
 - lorazepam or any of the ingredients listed at the end of this leaflet
 - any other medicine from the benzodiazepine group of medicines.
- you have severe and chronic lung disease**
- you have sleep apnoea, a condition where you have breathing problems when you sleep.**
- you are depressed with or without anxiety problems.**

Lorazepam can increase thoughts of death or suicide.

Do not take ATIVAN if the packaging is torn or shows signs of tampering.

Do not take ATIVAN after the expiry date (EXP) printed on the pack.

If you take it after the expiry date has passed, it may not work as well or have no effect at all.

Do not give this medicine to children unless advised by the child's doctor.

The safety and effectiveness of ATIVAN in children under 16 years has not been established.

Before you take it

You must tell your doctor if:

- you have any allergies to:**
 - any other medicines
 - any other substances, such as foods, preservatives or dyes.
- you are pregnant or planning to become pregnant**

Do not take ATIVAN if you are pregnant or planning to become pregnant unless you and your doctor have discussed the risks and benefits involved.

- you are breast-feeding or plan to breast-feed**

Do not take ATIVAN if you are breast-feeding or planning to breast-feed unless you and your doctor have discussed the risks and benefits involved.

- you have or have had any other medical conditions including:**

- liver, kidney or lung disease
- blood disorders
- fits or convulsions
- severe muscle weakness known as myasthenia gravis
- low blood pressure
- glaucoma (high pressure in the eye)
- depression, psychosis or schizophrenia.

5. you drink alcohol regularly.

Alcohol may increase the effects of ATIVAN.

If you have not told your doctor about any of the above, tell them before you take any ATIVAN.

Taking other medicines

Tell your doctor if you are taking any other medicines, including medicines that you buy without a prescription from a pharmacy, supermarket or health food shop.

Some medicines may interfere with ATIVAN. These include:

- other sleeping tablets, sedatives or tranquillisers
- medicines for depression
- medicines for allergies for example antihistamines or cold tablets
- pain relievers
- muscle relaxants
- medicines to control fits.

These medicines may increase the effects of ATIVAN. You may need to take different amounts of your medicine or you may need to take different medicines. Your doctor will advise you.

Your doctor or pharmacist may have more information on medicines to be careful with or avoid while taking ATIVAN.

How to take it

How much to take

The dose of ATIVAN may be different for each person. Your doctor will decide the right dose for you.

For anxiety, the usual daily dose is 2 to 3 mg administered in divided doses. However, the daily dose can range from 1 to 10 mg.

For sleeping problems (insomnia) due to anxiety, a dose of 1 to 2 mg

taken at bedtime is usually prescribed.

If you are taking ATIVAN before surgery the usual dose is 2 to 4 mg the night before surgery. Another dose of 2 to 4 mg may also be given 1 to 2 hours before surgery.

Elderly people may need a lower dose.

How to take it

Swallow ATIVAN with a glass of water.

It may be taken with or without food.

When to take it

Your doctor will tell you how many times during the day you need to take ATIVAN.

How long to take it

Do not take ATIVAN for longer than your doctor says.

ATIVAN is usually used for short periods only (for example 2-4 weeks). Continuous long term use is not recommended unless advised by your doctor. The use of benzodiazepines may lead to dependence on the medicine.

Continue taking ATIVAN as long as your doctor recommends it.

If you forget to take it

If it is almost time for your next dose, skip the dose you missed and take your next dose when you are meant to. Otherwise, take it as soon as you remember, and then go back to taking it as you would normally.

Do not take a double dose to make up for the dose that you missed.

If you have missed more than two doses in a row, speak to your doctor or pharmacist.

If you are unsure about whether to take your next dose, speak to your doctor or pharmacist.

If you are taking ATIVAN for insomnia due to anxiety and forget to take ATIVAN before you go to bed, do not take any ATIVAN if you wake up late in the night or early morning.

Taking ATIVAN late at night or early in the morning may make it hard for you to wake in the morning. If you have any questions about this, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

If you take too much (overdose)

Immediately telephone your doctor or Poisons Information Centre (in Australia telephone 13 11 26, in New Zealand telephone 0800 764 766) for advice, or go to casualty at your nearest hospital, if you think that you or anyone else may have taken too much ATIVAN. Do this even if there are no signs of discomfort or poisoning. Also report any other medicine or alcohol which has been taken.

You may need urgent medical attention.

If you take too much ATIVAN you may feel drowsy, confused, tired, dizzy, have difficulty breathing, feel weak or become unconscious.

While you are taking it

Things you must do

Take ATIVAN exactly as your doctor has prescribed.

Tell all doctors, dentists and pharmacists who are treating you that you are taking ATIVAN.

If you become pregnant while you are taking ATIVAN, tell your doctor immediately.

Tell your doctor if you feel ATIVAN is not helping your condition.

If you are being treated for anxiety, be sure to discuss with your doctor any problems you may have and how you feel, especially if your anxiety attacks are getting worse or more frequent.

This will help your doctor to determine the best treatment for you.

Visit your doctor regularly.

Your doctor needs to check your progress and see whether you need to keep taking ATIVAN.

Always discuss with your doctor any problems or difficulties you have during or after taking ATIVAN.

Tell your doctor if, for any reason, you have not taken your medicine exactly as prescribed.

Otherwise your doctor may think that it was not effective and change your treatment unnecessarily.

Keep enough ATIVAN to last weekends and holidays.

Things you must not do

Do not drive or operate machinery until you know how ATIVAN affects you.

This medicine may cause drowsiness or dizziness in some people and therefore may affect alertness.

Make sure you know how you react to ATIVAN before you drive a car, operate machinery, or do anything else that could be dangerous if you are drowsy, dizzy or not alert.

Even if you take ATIVAN at night, you may still be drowsy or dizzy the next day.

Do not take ATIVAN for a longer time than your doctor has prescribed.

ATIVAN should be taken for short periods only (for example 2 to 4 weeks), unless advised otherwise by your doctor.

Do not change your dose without first checking with your doctor.

Do not stop taking ATIVAN or lower the dose, without first checking with your doctor.

Stopping this medicine suddenly may cause some unwanted effects. Your doctor will slowly reduce your dose before you can stop taking it completely.

Do not suddenly stop taking ATIVAN if you suffer from epilepsy.

Stopping this medicine suddenly may make your epilepsy worse.

Do not use this medicine to treat any other complaints unless your doctor says to.

Do not give ATIVAN to anyone else, even if their symptoms seem similar to yours.

Things to be careful of

Be careful when drinking alcohol while taking ATIVAN.

Combining ATIVAN and alcohol can make you more sleepy, dizzy or lightheaded.

Your doctor may suggest that you avoid alcohol or reduce the amount of alcohol you drink while you are taking ATIVAN.

Be careful if you are elderly, unwell or taking other medicines.

Some people may experience side effects such as drowsiness, confusion, dizziness and unsteadiness, which may increase the risk of a fall.

Side effects

Tell your doctor or pharmacist as soon as possible if you do not feel well while you are using ATIVAN.

ATIVAN helps most people with anxiety but it may have unwanted side effects in some people.

All medicines may have side effects. Sometimes they are serious, most of the time they are not. You may need medical treatment if you get some of the side effects.

Ask your doctor or pharmacist to answer any questions you may have.

If side effects do happen, they are more likely to happen when you first start taking ATIVAN. These side effects may go away during treatment as your body adjusts to the dose.

However, tell your doctor if you notice any of the following and they worry you:

- drowsiness
- dizziness
- sleepiness
- clumsiness or unsteadiness
- weakness
- loss of memory.

These are the more common side effects of ATIVAN.

Other less common or rare side effects include:

- skin rashes
- feeling sick or vomiting
- outbursts of anger and increased excitement
- confusion or depression
- headache
- sleep disturbances
- blurred vision
- low blood pressure
- dry mouth
- excessive salivation
- changes in appetite
- nausea.

Tell your doctor if you notice anything else that is making you feel unwell when you are taking, or soon after you have finished taking, ATIVAN.

Other side effects not listed above may occur in some people.

Ask your doctor or pharmacist if there is anything you don't understand.

Do not be alarmed by this list of possible side effects.

You may not experience any of them.

After taking it

Storage

Keep ATIVAN in a cool dry place where the temperature stays below 25°C.

Keep your tablets in their blister pack until it is time to take them.

If you take the tablets out of the box or the blister pack they may not keep well.

Do not store it or any other medicines, in a bathroom or near a sink. Do not leave it in the car or on window sills.

Heat and dampness can destroy some medicines.

Keep it where children cannot reach it.

A locked cupboard at least one-and-a-half metres above the ground is a good place to store medicines.

Disposal

If your doctor tells you to stop taking ATIVAN or the tablets have passed their expiry date, ask your pharmacist what to do with any tablets left over.

Product description

What it looks like

ATIVAN 1 mg tablets are white with a score to make them easy to split. They are plain on the back and with "1 L" debossed on the front face, the break bar separating the '1' and 'L.'

ATIVAN 2.5 mg tablets are yellow with a deep score to make them easy to split. They are plain on the back and debossed "2.5 L" on the front face, the break bar separating the '2.5' and 'L.'

To break tablet, place on a hard surface with score facing upwards and press gently on the tablet with your thumb.

ATIVAN 1 mg and 2.5 mg tablets are supplied in blister packs or glass bottles in Australia. Each pack contains 50 tablets.

ATIVAN 1 mg and 2.5 mg tablets are supplied in glass bottles in New Zealand. ATIVAN 1 mg bottles contain 250 tablets and ATIVAN 2.5 mg bottles contain 100 tablets.

Ingredients

Active ingredient:

Each ATIVAN 1 mg tablet contains 1 mg lorazepam.

Each ATIVAN 2.5 mg tablet contains 2.5 mg lorazepam.

Inactive ingredients:

- magnesium stearate
- microcrystalline cellulose
- polacrillin potassium
- lactose monohydrate
- iron oxide yellow (2.5 mg only)
- quinoline yellow (2.5 mg only).

ATIVAN does not contain gluten, sucrose, tartrazine or any other azo dyes.

Sponsor

In Australia:

Aspen Pharma Pty Ltd
34-36 Chandos Street,
St. Leonards NSW 2065
Australia

In New Zealand:

Pharmacy Retailing (NZ) Ltd t/a
Healthcare Logistics
58 Richard Pearse Drive
Airport Oaks
AUCKLAND

Australian Registration Numbers:

1 mg tablets: AUST R 10387
(blister pack); AUST R 237801
(bottle)

2.5 mg tablets: AUST R 10388
(blister pack); AUST R 237802
(bottle)

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