

Contrave

(naltrexone-bupropion)

- [How does this medication work? What will it do for me?](#)
- [How should I use this medication?](#)
- [Who should NOT take this medication?](#)
- [What side effects are possible with this medication?](#)

How does this medication work? What will it do for me?

This medication contains two ingredients: naltrexone and bupropion. Naltrexone is a *pure opioid antagonist*. Bupropion belongs to the family of *antidepressants*. Together, they work in different areas of the brain to control appetite and cravings.

Together, they are **used in addition to exercise and a reduced-calorie diet to help reduce weight for adults who are clinically obese or overweight** and have high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes or high cholesterol

How should I use this medication?

The usual starting dose of this medication is one tablet taken by mouth once daily, in the morning for the first week. For the second week, the dose is one tablet twice a day, once in the morning and one with the evening meal. The dose is increased by 1 tablet daily each week until the **recommended maximum daily dose of two tablets taken twice daily**.

Naltrexone-bupropion may be taken with meals. High-fat meals should be avoided, as this increases the amount of medication in the body and can increase the side effects. Swallow the tablets whole and do not cut, crush or chew them.

Many things can affect the dose of medication that a person needs, such as body weight, other medical conditions, and other medications. **If your doctor has recommended a dose different from the ones listed here**, do not change the way that you are taking the medication without consulting your doctor.

If you miss a dose, skip the missed dose and continue with your regular dosing schedule. **Do not take a double dose to make up for a missed one. If you are not sure what to do after missing a dose, contact your doctor or pharmacist for advice.**

Store this medication at room temperature, protect it from light and moisture, and keep it out of the reach of children.

Who should NOT take this medication?

Do not take this medication if you:

- are allergic to naltrexone, bupropion or any ingredients of this medication
- are pregnant
- are taking another medication that contains bupropion (e.g., Wellbutrin XL®, Wellbutrin® SR, or Zyban®)
- are currently taking thioridazine (an antipsychotic medication)
- are receiving opiate analgesics (e.g., narcotics medications such as oxycodone and codeine) or opiate agonists (e.g., methadone)
- are abruptly discontinuing alcohol, benzodiazepines (e.g., diazepam, clonazepam, lorazepam), other sedatives (e.g., phenobarbital), or seizure medications
- are experiencing opiate withdrawal
- have uncontrolled high blood pressure
- have or have had an eating disorder (bulimia or anorexia nervosa)
- have severely decreased liver function
- have end-stage kidney failure
- have a seizure disorder or history of seizures
- have taken a monoamine oxidase inhibitor (MAO inhibitor; e.g., phenelzine, tranylcypromine) within the past 2 weeks

What side effects are possible with this medication?

- abdominal pain
- constipation
- diarrhea
- dizziness
- dry mouth
- fatigue
- flu-like symptoms (e.g., muscle aches, cough, fatigue, sudden lack of energy, sore throat, fever)
- hair loss
- headache
- heartburn
- metallic taste in the mouth
- nausea
- rash
- sensation of spinning
- sweating
- tremor
- trouble paying attention
- trouble sleeping

- unusual dreams
- vomiting

Check with your doctor as soon as possible if any of the following side effects occur:

- acting on dangerous impulses
- angry or violent behaviour
- new or worsened anxiety
- aggressiveness
- episodes of mania (e.g., feeling very high, talking fast, risk taking, needing less sleep)
- hallucinations (seeing or hearing things that are not there)
- increased blood pressure (e.g., headache, nosebleed, dizziness, facial flushing)
- increased heart rate
- panic attacks
- restlessness
- ringing in the ears
- new or worse symptoms of depression (e.g., poor concentration, changes in weight, changes in sleep, decreased interest in activities, thoughts of suicide)
- signs of liver problems (yellowing of the eyes or skin, abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, dark urine) symptoms of glaucoma (e.g., blurred vision, seeing halos of bright colours around lights, red eyes, increased pressure in your eyes, eye pain or discomfort)
- symptoms of low blood sugar (e.g., cold sweat, cool pale skin, headache, fast heartbeat, weakness)

Stop taking the medication and seek immediate medical attention if any of the following occur:

- signs of a serious allergic reaction (e.g., abdominal cramps, difficulty breathing, nausea and vomiting, or swelling of the face and throat)
- seizures
- opioid withdrawal (if opioids were taken less than 7 to 10 days before starting naltrexone-bupropion)(e.g., nausea and vomiting, anxiety, trouble sleeping, hot and cold flashes, perspiration, muscle cramps, diarrhea)
- opioid overdose (if taking opioids) (e.g., trouble breathing, slow, shallow breathing, very drowsy, very dizzy, confused, feeling faint)
- thoughts of or attempts of suicide or self-harm