



Managing Tardive Dyskinesia

Tardive Dyskinesia (TD) is involuntary movement of your face and body. You may blink your eyes, stick out your tongue, wave your arms, or a number of other movements you cannot control. Coping with TD is an ongoing process. Medication, combined with lifestyle changes, may lessen the severity of your TD. To successfully manage TD, it's important to take your medication even when your symptoms are less severe. If you notice side effects, it's important to talk to your doctor or pharmacist right away. Amber Specialty Pharmacy is here to help you manage all aspects of your condition, including side effects.

Following are some common side effects from medications that treat TD, along with some tips for coping with TD. Note, your symptoms and side effects may vary from this list.



Fatigue

Your TD medication might make you feel sleepy. Don't drive or operate machinery until you know how your medication affects you. If drowsiness is making it difficult for you to perform daily tasks, talk to your doctor, and try the following:

- ▶ Review all of your medications with your doctor or pharmacist to check for possible drug interactions and to see if other medications are causing drowsiness.
- ▶ Take a short nap (less than 30 minutes) when possible.
- ▶ Make sure your bedroom is dark and quiet when you sleep.
- ▶ Stay on a regular sleep schedule when possible. Regular daily routines are helpful.
- ▶ Eat a balanced diet.
- ▶ Drink enough water throughout the day and do not drink alcohol.
- ▶ Move around, stretch or take a walk if you have been sitting for a long period of time.
- ▶ Regular exercise may boost energy levels. Talk to your doctor before beginning an exercise program.

Depression and Anxiety

Depression and anxiety may be a side effect of your TD medication. It may make you feel irritable, restless, anti-social and angry. Additional symptoms of depression and anxiety include:

- Tiredness or trouble thinking
- Difficulty making decisions because you feel no matter your decision, it will be wrong.
- Not wanting to eat/eating too much
- Feeling sad, indifferent, withdrawn or lonely
- Avoiding social situations
- Losing interest in activities that used to bring you joy.
- Mood Swings
- Constant state of worry
- Avoiding social situations - you want to be alone

It's important to tell your doctor if you're feeling depressed or anxious. To help control these feelings:

- ▶ Take deep breaths. Breathe out through pursed lips.
- ▶ Learn coping skills and conflict resolution.
- ▶ Avoid the use of tobacco, alcohol and caffeine.
- ▶ Stay informed, talk with others and join a support group.
- ▶ Commit to staying connected with others.
- ▶ Get at least eight hours of sleep each night.
- ▶ Including exercise in your daily routine is extremely important.
- ▶ Practice meditation each day and focus on a calm state of mind.
- ▶ Keep a journal of how you feel each day.
- ▶ Talk with your healthcare provider about your feelings to see if talking to a professional or additional medication may help you.

Manage Stress

TD can cause stress making symptoms of TD hard to manage. This becomes a difficult cycle. Following are tips to better manage your stress:

- ▶ Identify what is causing stress in your life. Is it something you can avoid or reduce the effects of?
- ▶ Know when to say "no" to new responsibilities that cause stress. Ask for help if you can't say no to something.
- ▶ Live a healthy lifestyle by exercising often, eating a healthy diet and getting plenty of sleep.
- ▶ Take time to relax. Plan relaxing daily activities you enjoy like walking, reading, meditating, or talking with a friend.
- ▶ Consider joining a support group or talking with a therapist. Connecting with people who understand can be helpful.
- ▶ Maintain your social life. Staying connected to family and friends is good for your well-being.

Trouble Sleeping

Your TD medication may make it difficult to sleep. Not sleeping well may make it harder to cope with your symptoms (both physically and emotionally). Tell your doctor if you're not getting enough sleep, and keep these tips in mind:

- ▶ Stay on a regular sleep schedule, if possible.
- ▶ Choose a relaxing activity before bed, like reading a book or listening to soft music.
- ▶ Avoid electronics before bed. This includes watching TV or being on a phone, tablet or computer.
- ▶ Avoid caffeine late in the day.
- ▶ Don't exercise before bed.
- ▶ If you need to take a nap, don't nap for more than 30 minutes and don't nap close to your bedtime.
- ▶ If the above tips do not help, speak to your doctor about over-the-counter medication or prescription options.

Restlessness

Your TD medication may make you feel restless or like you need to be constantly moving. Examples of this include rocking while standing or sitting, marching the feet and crossing and uncrossing the legs. If you notice restlessness, talk to your doctor to evaluate new movements.

Joint Pain

You may experience joint pain, depending on your medication. This may include the hands, knees, ankles and other joints. If you experience joint pain, talk to your doctor to identify the cause of the pain, and follow these tips:

- ▶ Apply heat or ice to the area you are experiencing pain if it's okay with your doctor.
- ▶ Take a warm bath.
- ▶ Ask your doctor or pharmacist about over-the-counter medications that may help with joint pain.

Nausea, Vomiting and Dehydration

Your TD medication may cause nausea and vomiting. If you are vomiting, it's important to drink plenty of fluids so you don't become dehydrated. If vomiting continues for more than 4 hours, contact your doctor. Also, remember to:

- ▶ Drink and eat slowly.
- ▶ Drink plenty of fluids.
- ▶ Allow time to rest after eating to help with digestion.
- ▶ Eat small amounts of bland foods, like Jello, bananas, rice or toast.
- ▶ Avoid greasy, fried or spicy foods.
- ▶ Get plenty of rest.
- ▶ Add a slice of lemon, lime, mint or cucumber to your water for flavor.

Dry Mouth

Your TD medication may give you a dry mouth. To help:

- ▶ Chew sugar-free gum or suck on sugar-free candies.
- ▶ Limit caffeine.
- ▶ Use mouthwash designed for dry mouth. Do not use mouthwashes that contain alcohol.
- ▶ Stop tobacco use.
- ▶ Avoid over-the-counter anti-histamines and decongestants.
- ▶ Sip water often.
- ▶ Use a humidifier to add moisture to the air.

Due to a dry mouth, you are at greater risk of developing cavities. To help avoid cavities:

- Avoid sugary and/or acidic food and drink
- Brush with a fluoride toothpaste and use a fluoride rinse
- See your dentist every 6 months

Weight Gain

Your TD medication may cause weight gain. Keep track of your weight each week and let your doctor know if you gain more than 5 pounds in one month. It's important to try to stay active and exercise regularly (if it's okay with your doctor). Eat a balanced diet. If you are having trouble with your diet consider a nutritional consultation with Amber Specialty Pharmacy's Registered Dietitian.

Integrative Medicine

Therapies such as physical therapy and occupational therapy may help lessen the symptoms of your TD. Trying meditation or massage may also be helpful. Your doctor may recommend over-the-counter supplements to help lessen your symptoms. Remember to talk to your doctor before trying any new therapies or taking any over-the-counter supplements.

FAQs

What is tardive dyskinesia (TD)?

TD is a disorder of the nervous system, which causes repetitive movements of the mouth, tongue, upper body, and/or limbs. TD is caused by long-term use of certain medications used to treat psychiatric disorders and some stomach problems.

Who gets TD?

TD is estimated to affect at least 500,000 people in the US. Anyone taking certain psychiatric or stomach medications for a long period of time is at risk of developing TD. All medications affect people differently; there is no way to tell in advance whether you'll have side effects. However, the following may increase your risk of developing TD.

- Taking older (first generation) psychiatric medications.
- Taking higher doses of medication.
- Stopping and starting psychiatric medications.
- Older adults may be more likely to develop TD.
- Ask your doctor or pharmacist if any of your medications may cause TD.

Will TD go away if I stop medication?

If you notice signs of TD, talk to your doctor right away. If you've found an antipsychotic medication that helps you, you may want to continue taking it. This can be a hard decision and should be made by with your doctor. Do not quit taking any medications unless your doctor tells you to.

What kind of treatments are available?

There are medications available that can help reduce the severity of TD. Talk to your doctor to see if any of these medications are right for you. Rehabilitation and alternative medicine, like taking supplements or practicing meditation may reduce the severity of your symptoms. Always talk to your doctor or pharmacist before taking any supplements.

What are the symptoms of TD?

Each TD patient is unique and will have his or her own set of uncontrollable movements in varying degrees of severity. Movements can be slow or fast. Common symptoms include:

- Distorted movements of the mouth, such as frowning, sticking out the tongue, lip smacking, puckering and chewing.
- Rapid blinking.
- Jerking arm and leg movements, tapping feet.
- Pelvic thrusts.
- Swaying side to side.
- Disfigured facial features such as drooping of the mouth or eyes.
- Difficulty breathing, swallowing or speaking.

How do I manage side effects?

Medication can affect each patient differently. Amber Specialty Pharmacy works with patients to help manage any side effects that occur. It's important to discuss any side effects that you experience with your pharmacist or doctor.



Amber Specialty Pharmacy is here to help.

We offer guidance and support through our dedicated team of healthcare experts. From the beginning, we help you with the enrollment process and review your insurance coverage. We explore financial assistance opportunities to help you lower your medication costs whenever possible. Our pharmacists review your prescriptions with you - including how to take your medication and manage any side effects. Pharmacists are available 24/7 to assist you when you have questions. Our Registered Nurse and Registered Dietitian offer personalized consultations to assist you with any medically-based questions and nutritional care. We stay in touch with you regularly to remind you when it is time to refill your prescriptions. We are always here to help.

Additional Resources:

Dystonia Medical Research Foundation - www.dystonia-foundation.org

Mental Health America - www.mentalhealthamerica.net

National Alliance on Mental Illness - www.nami.org

National Organization for Rare Diseases (NORD)- www.rarediseases.org

This information is intended for educational purposes only. The material is not a substitute for professional help or medical diagnosis. It is important that you consult a medical professional if this information leads you to believe there is a concern for you or your patient(s). The diagnosis and treatment of all physical and/or psychological disorders requires a trained professional.

References: Cloud LJ, Zutshi D, Factor SA. Tardive dyskinesia: therapeutic options for an increasingly common disorder. *Neurotherapeutics*. 2014;11(1):166-176.