

# Ambien (CR)/Intermezzo (zolpidem)



## What is it usually prescribed for?

Insomnia (sleep problems).



## How does it work?

Ambien helps improve sleep by boosting the brain chemical GABA.



## What should I expect?

Ambien usually takes effect in less than one hour. It helps improve the quality of sleep. Over time, it may also decrease the number of times you wake up throughout the night. Ambien is usually used for short periods of time (a few weeks).

Your healthcare professional will help find a dose that works well for you. Tell your healthcare professional how it's working for you and if you have any side effects so the dose can be changed if needed.

Take Ambien exactly as prescribed to get the full benefit of this medicine.

## HOW DOES AMBIEN (CR) / INTERMEZZO HELP ME SLEEP?



Falling asleep?

Ambien

Ambien CR

Staying asleep?

Ambien CR

Going back to sleep?

Intermezzo



## Will I have side effects?

You may or may not have side effects when taking Ambien. The chance of some side effects increases with larger doses.

Ambien and Intermezzo can lead to emotional and/or physical dependence (addiction) when used in larger doses or for longer periods of time. People with a history of abusing alcohol have a higher chance of addiction to Ambien. Keep your Ambien prescription safe to prevent misuse and abuse.

## What are common side effects and what can I do to feel better?

If your side effects are mild, talk to your healthcare professional about them at your next appointment.

	Drink plenty of water	Drink less alcohol	Do more exercise	Healthcare professional suggestion
Feeling dizzy	X	X		
Feeling drowsy	X	X	X	
Diarrhea	X	X		
Headache	X	X	X	

Note: This is not a complete list of side effects; other side effects are possible. Before starting Ambien, tell your healthcare professional about all the medicines you are taking to avoid unexpected side effects.



Neuroscience Education Institute

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## YOU'RE NOT ALONE!

In 2019, Ambien was prescribed over 15.4 million times in the United States.







## What should I avoid?

Don't start any new medicines, over-the-counter drugs, or herbal remedies without talking to your healthcare professional first. There are many interactions with medicines that may increase your chance of side effects.

Do not suddenly stop taking Ambien unless your healthcare professional has told you to, because it can lead to side effects like muscle cramps, sweating, and other negative feelings.

Alcohol and other drugs should not be used the same evening on nights when taking Ambien. Doing so increases the chance of side effects, like reduced heart rate, slowed breathing, and complex behaviors such as driving while not fully awake and without memory of doing so.

## WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER

-  This medicine can lead to emotional and/or physical dependence (addiction)
-  Alcohol and other drugs should not be used the same evening on nights when taking this medicine
-  Tell your healthcare professional about any troubling side effects so that you can work together to address them
-  Do not suddenly stop taking this medicine unless told to do so by your healthcare professional
-  Don't start any new medicines, over-the-counter drugs, or herbal remedies without talking to your healthcare professional
-  Get medical care right away if you have serious side effects



## When should I call a healthcare professional right away or visit the emergency room?

If you have any **serious** side effects. Here are some examples of serious side effects:

- Thoughts of hurting yourself
- Feeling like you might pass out
- Confusion, hallucinations (hearing or seeing things that are not there)
- Memory problems, unusual thoughts, or behavior
- Strong feelings of sadness, fear or worry, aggression, agitation

If you think there has been an overdose, call your poison control center (800-222-1222) or get medical care right away.



## Where can I get more help?

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) – [nami.org](https://www.nami.org)

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline – Call 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

Crisis Text Line – Text “HELLO” to 741741



## Notes and questions for my next appointment

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