

# Ritalin (LA) (d, l-methylphenidate)



## What is it usually prescribed for?

ADHD (attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder), narcolepsy, and other conditions.



## How does it work?

Ritalin helps improve attention, concentration, wakefulness, and hyperactivity by boosting the brain chemicals dopamine and norepinephrine.



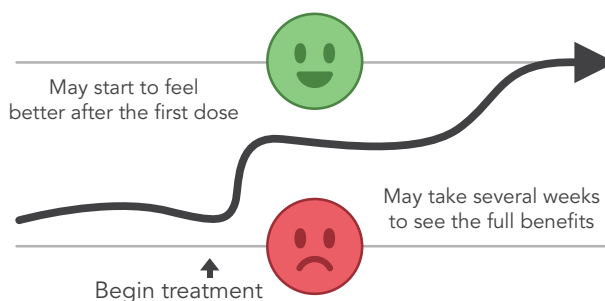
## What should I expect?

It may take a few weeks for you to feel the full benefits of taking this medicine. Some symptoms may improve after the first dose, but in some cases the full benefits of this medicine may take several weeks.

Your healthcare professional will start with a low dose that is slowly increased to find the best dose that works 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.

Your healthcare professional may check your blood pressure and heart rate (pulse) before starting treatment and during treatment occasionally because Ritalin can increase these.

### WHEN WILL I FEEL BETTER?



Ritalin is a federally controlled substance and has restrictions on prescribing. For example, your healthcare professional will only be able to prescribe a one-month supply of medicine at a time. Take Ritalin exactly as prescribed to get the full benefit of this medicine.



## Will I have side effects?

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

Ritalin can lead to emotional and/or physical dependence (addiction) when used for longer periods of time. Keep your Ritalin 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 caffeine and alcohol	Eat small meals more often	Healthcare professional suggestion
Nausea	X	X	X	
Feeling less hungry	X		X	
Trouble sleeping		X		
Feeling nervous		X		
Headache	X	X		
Dry mouth	X	X		

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



Neuroscience Education Institute

Last updated 01/2022

# Ritalin (LA) (d, l-methylphenidate)

## YOU'RE NOT ALONE!

In 2019, medications in the same class as Ritalin were prescribed over 14.2 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 Ritalin unless your healthcare professional has told you to, because it can lead to side effects like headaches, irritability, and other negative feelings.

Use less alcohol and recreational drugs. They may decrease the benefits of Ritalin and increase the chance of side effects.

## WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER

-  This medicine can lead to emotional and/or physical dependence (addiction)
-  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:

- Chest pain, trouble breathing, feeling like you might pass out
- Hallucinations (seeing or hearing things that are not there), new behavior problems
- Numbness, pain, cold feeling, unexplained wounds, skin color changes in your fingers or toes
- Penis erection that is painful or lasts 4 hours or longer

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

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

