

Phentermine information

How does phentermine work?

Phentermine is an appetite suppressant, and its hunger-suppressing effects are believed to occur through increased norepinephrine activity in the brain, particularly the hypothalamus.

How should I take phentermine?

It's recommended that phentermine be taken in the morning with breakfast. Taking it later in the day may increase the risk of insomnia.

What are the side effects of phentermine?

Phentermine is a stimulant and may cause the following:

- Insomnia
- Dry mouth
- Unpleasant taste in the mouth
- Palpitations
- Anxiety or agitation
- Increased heart rate

Can phentermine raise blood pressure?

Since phentermine is a stimulant, it theoretically can raise blood pressure. However, studies have shown that average blood pressure typically declines in phentermine-treated patients. This may occur secondary to weight loss or some other unknown effect. Patients should check their blood pressure periodically after starting phentermine and report significant changes to their provider.

Conditions where phentermine should not be taken:

- Pregnant women or women who are trying to become pregnant
- Patients whose blood pressure goes up on phentermine
- Heart disease
- Hyperthyroidism
- Significant liver or kidney disease
- With certain medications (see drug interactions below)

Can phentermine cause heart problems?

In the 1990s, phentermine was combined with fenfluramine in the popular "Phen-fen" diet pill. Fenfluramine was later found to cause valvular heart disease and pulmonary hypertension. In 1997, the FDA pulled fenfluramine from the market and, at the same time, placed a warning about these events on phentermine. No evidence prior to or after that time has linked phentermine to these conditions. Furthermore, studies that have looked specifically for an association have found none.

Is phentermine addictive?

Phentermine is an atypical amphetamine analog and schedule IV controlled substance; however, abuse is not common. In a study of long-term phentermine users, psychological and physical addiction were not observed upon abrupt discontinuation.

How long can I take phentermine?

The original prescribing information for phentermine recommends that it be given for a maximum of 3 months. In practice, many patients take it off and on or continuously for longer. Phentermine is also a part of the diet drug Qsymia (phentermine + topiramate), which has been taken for up to a year in studies.

Phentermine drug interactions

- **MAO inhibitors (e.g. linezolid, selegiline)** - do not take phentermine with MAO inhibitors
- **Serotonergic medications (e.g. antidepressants, migraine medications)** - stimulants like phentermine have serotonergic activity and may potentiate the effects of other serotonergic medications. Most patients have no issues when combining serotonergic drugs, but rare cases of serotonin syndrome, a potentially fatal hyper-autonomic state, have been reported. Symptoms of serotonin syndrome include rapid heart rate, hypertension, confusion/agitation, fever, sweating, and tremor. Contact your provider immediately if you experience these symptoms.
- **Psychoactive medications** - phentermine works in the brain to suppress hunger. Any medication that has psychoactive effects (e.g. antidepressants, antipsychotics, seizure medications, insomnia drugs, bipolar medications, ADHD medications) may be affected by phentermine's stimulant properties.