

# Bupropion, Oral Tablet



Medically reviewed by [Femi Aremu, PharmD](#) — Written by University of Illinois  
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## Highlights for bupropion

1. Bupropion oral tablet is available as brand-name drugs and as generic drugs. **Brand names: Wellbutrin SR, Wellbutrin XL, Aplenzin, and Forfivo XL.**
2. Bupropion comes only as an immediate-release tablet or an extended-release tablet. Both forms are taken by mouth.
3. Bupropion is used to treat depression and prevent seasonal affective disorder (SAD). It's also used to help people stop smoking.

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## Important warnings

### FDA Warnings ⓘ

This drug has black box warnings. These are the most serious warnings from the ...

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reduce the risk of seizures, your doctor may increase your dosage slowly.

- **High blood pressure warning:** This drug can cause severe high blood pressure. Your doctor may monitor your blood pressure during treatment with this drug.
- **Manic episodes warning:** This drug can cause periods of mania. Symptoms can include greatly increased energy, severe trouble sleeping, racing thoughts, or reckless behavior. They can also include having unusually exciting ideas, feeling extremely happy or irritable, or talking more or faster than usual.

## What is bupropion?

Bupropion is a prescription drug. It comes in the form of an immediate-release tablet or an extended-release tablet. Both forms are taken by mouth. An extended-release drug is released into your system slowly over time. An immediate-release drug works more quickly.

Bupropion is available as the brand-name drugs **Wellbutrin SR**, **Wellbutrin XL**, **Aplenzin**, and **Forfivo XL**. It's also available as a generic drug. Generic drugs usually cost less than the brand-name version. In some cases, they may not be available in every strength or form as the brand-name drug.

## Why it's used

Bupropion is used to treat depression and prevent seasonal affective disorder (SAD). With SAD, people have episodes of depression that occur in the fall and winter.

Bupropion is also used to help people stop smoking.

## How it works

Bupropion belongs to a class of drugs called antidepressants. A class of drugs is a group of medications that work in a similar way. These drugs are often used to treat similar conditions.

Bupropion works by increasing the activity of natural chemicals in your brain. Your nerves use these chemicals to send messages to each other. These chemicals include dopamine and norepinephrine.

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## Bupropion side effects

Bupropion oral tablet doesn't cause drowsiness, but it can cause other side effects.

### More common side effects

The more common side effects of bupropion can include:

- agitation
- dry mouth
- constipation
- headache
- nausea
- vomiting
- dizziness
- sweating
- shakiness
- trouble sleeping
- blurred vision
- fast heartbeat
- confusion
- rash
- increased anger
- abnormal heart rhythms
- changes in hearing, such as ringing in the ears or hearing noises that aren't real

If these effects are mild, they may go away within a few days or a couple of weeks. If they're more severe or don't go away, talk with your doctor or pharmacist.

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- **Mental health effects.** Symptoms can include:
  - thoughts about suicide or dying
  - attempts to die by suicide
  - new or worsened depression
  - new or worsened anxiety
  - feeling very agitated or restless
  - panic attacks
  - trouble sleeping
  - new or worsened irritability
  - acting aggressive, angry, or violent
  - acting on dangerous impulses
  - an extreme increase in activity and talking
  - other unusual changes in behavior or mood
- **Eye problems.** Symptoms can include:
  - eye pain
  - swelling or redness in or around the eye
  - vision changes, such as blurred vision or double vision
- **Seizures.** Symptoms can include:
  - confusion
  - staring spells
  - jerking movements of your arms and legs that you can't control
  - loss of consciousness

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## Bupropion may interact with other medications

Bupropion oral tablet can interact with other medications, vitamins, or herbs you may be taking. An interaction is when a substance changes the way a drug works. This can be harmful or prevent the drug from working well.

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## Drugs you should not use with bupropion

***Do not take these drugs with bupropion.*** Doing so can cause dangerous effects in your body. Examples of these drugs include:

- **Monoamine oxidase inhibitors (MAOIs), such as phenelzine or selegiline.** Using these drugs with bupropion can result in severe high blood pressure. At least 14 days should pass between your use of an MAOI and use of bupropion.

## Interactions that increase your risk for side effects

Taking bupropion with certain medications raises your risk for side effects from these drugs. Examples of these drugs include:

- **Antidepressants, such as venlafaxine, nortriptyline, imipramine, desipramine, paroxetine, fluoxetine, or sertraline.** Increased side effects can include seizures. If these drugs are needed, your doctor may start you on a low dosage and increase it slowly.
- **Antipsychotics, such as haloperidol, risperidone, or thioridazine.** Increased side effects can include seizures. If these drugs are needed, your doctor may start you on a low dosage and increase it slowly.
- **Beta-blockers, such as metoprolol.** Increased side effects can include low blood pressure. Your doctor may lower your dosage of these medications if they're taken with bupropion.
- **Anti-arrhythmics, such as propafenone or flecainide.** Increased side effects can include fainting and changes in your heartbeat (too fast or too slow). Your doctor may lower your dosage of these medications if they're taken with bupropion.
- **Theophylline.** Increased side effects can include seizures. If this drug is needed, your doctor may start you on a low dosage and increase it gradually.
- **Corticosteroids, such as prednisone or methylprednisolone.** Use of these drugs with bupropion may result in seizures. If these drugs are needed, your doctor may start you on a low dosage and increase it gradually.
- **Levodopa and amantadine.** Increased side effects can include restlessness, agitation, shakiness, loss of body movements, dizziness, loss of balance, or trouble walking.

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increased if you're taking these drugs and suddenly stop. Talk with your doctor to see if you have a greater chance of seizures.

## Interactions that can make your drugs less effective

When bupropion is used with certain drugs, it may not work as well to treat your condition. This is because the amount of bupropion in your body may be decreased. Examples of these drugs include:

- **HIV drugs, such as ritonavir, lopinavir, or efavirenz.** If you use one of these drugs with bupropion, your doctor may increase your bupropion dosage.
- **Anti-seizure drugs, such as carbamazepine, phenobarbital, or phenytoin.** If you use one of these drugs with bupropion, your doctor may increase your bupropion dosage.

**Disclaimer:** Our goal is to provide you with the most relevant and current information. However, because drugs interact differently in each person, we cannot guarantee that this information includes all possible interactions. This information is not a substitute for medical advice. Always speak with your healthcare provider about possible interactions with all prescription drugs, vitamins, herbs and supplements, and over-the-counter drugs that you are taking.

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## Bupropion warnings

This drug comes with several warnings.

### Allergy warning

This drug can cause a severe allergic reaction. Symptoms can include:

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- swollen lymph glands
- painful sores in your mouth or around your eyes
- trouble breathing

If you develop these symptoms, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.

**Don't take this drug again if you've ever had an allergic reaction to it.**

Taking it again could be fatal (cause death).

### Alcohol interaction warning

When taking bupropion, your risk for seizures increases if you have too many drinks that contain alcohol. It's also increased if you drink alcohol but suddenly stop. If you drink alcohol, talk with your doctor about whether this drug is safe for you.

### Warnings for people with certain health conditions

**For people with a seizure disorder:** This drug raises the risk of seizures. *You should not take this drug if you have a seizure disorder.*

**For people with eating disorders such as bulimia or anorexia:** This drug raises your risk for seizures. *You should not take this drug if you have an eating disorder.*

**For people with bipolar disorder:** This drug may make your condition worse. *You should not take this drug if you have bipolar disorder.*

**For people with kidney problems:** If you have kidney problems or a history of kidney disease, you may not be able to clear this drug from your body well. This may increase the levels of this drug in your body and cause more side effects. Your doctor may reduce your dosage of this drug, or how often you are given this drug.

**For people with liver disease:** Your doctor may reduce your dosage of this drug, or how often you are given this drug.

**For people with angle-closure glaucoma:** This drug can make your condition worse.

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2. There haven't been enough studies done in humans to be certain how the drug might affect the fetus.

Talk with your doctor if you're pregnant or planning to become pregnant. This drug should only be used if the potential benefit justifies the potential risk.

If you become pregnant while taking this drug, call your doctor right away.

**For women who are breastfeeding:** This drug passes into breast milk and may cause side effects in a child who is breastfed. Talk to your doctor if you breastfeed your child. You may need to decide whether to stop breastfeeding or stop taking this medication.

**For seniors:** The kidneys of older adults may not work as well as they used to. This can cause your body to process drugs more slowly. As a result, a higher amount of a drug stays in your body for a longer time. This raises your risk for side effects.

**For children:** It hasn't been established that this drug is safe and effective for use in children.

## How to take bupropion

All possible dosages and drug forms may not be included here. Your dosage, drug form, and how often you take the drug will depend on:

- your age
- the condition being treated
- how severe your condition is
- other medical conditions you have
- how you react to the first dose

## Dosage for depression

**Generic:** Bupropion

- **Form:** oral immediate-release tablet
- **Strengths:** 75 mg, 100 mg
- **Form:** oral extended-release tablet

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**Brand:** Wellbutrin SR

- **Form:** oral sustained-release tablet
- **Strengths:** 100 mg, 150 mg, 200 mg

**Brand:** Aplenzin

- **Form:** oral extended-release tablet
- **Strengths:** 174 mg, 348 mg, 522 mg

**Brand:** Forfivo XL

- **Form:** oral extended-release tablet
- **Strength:** 450 mg

**Adult dosage (ages 18–64 years)***Generic immediate-release:*

- **Typical starting dosage:** 200 mg per day, taken as 100 mg twice daily.
- **Dosage increases:** After 3 days, the dosage may be increased to 300 mg per day, taken as 100 mg, 3 times daily. Wait at least 6 hours between doses.
- **Maximum dosage:** 450 mg per day, taken in divided doses of no more than 150 mg each. Your doctor may prescribe this dosage for you if you don't respond to several weeks of treatment.

*Generic extended-release:*

- **Typical starting dosage:** 150 mg once daily in the morning.
- **Dosage increases:** After 4 days, the dosage may be increased to 300 mg, taken once daily in the morning.

*Wellbutrin XL:*

- **Typical starting dosage:** 150 mg once daily in the morning.
- **Dosage increases:** After 4 days, the dosage may be increased to 300 mg, taken once daily in the morning.

*Wellbutrin SR:*

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- **Maximum dosage:** 400 mg per day, taken as 200 mg twice daily. Your doctor may prescribe this dosage for you if you don't respond to several weeks of treatment at a dosage of 300 mg per day.

*Aplenzin:*

- **Typical starting dosage:** 174 mg once daily in the morning.
- **Dosage increases:** After 4 days, the dosage may be increased to 348 mg, taken once daily in the morning.

*Forfivo XL:*

- **Typical starting dosage:** 450 mg once per day.
- **Usage:** This brand can be used if:
  - you've been receiving 300 mg per day of another bupropion product for at least 2 weeks, and
  - you require a higher dosage of bupropion, at least 450 mg per day.

**Child dosage (ages 0–17 years)**

It has not been confirmed that this drug is safe and effective for use in people younger than 18 years.

**Senior dosage (ages 65 years and older)**

The kidneys of older adults may not work as well as they used to. This can cause your body to process drugs more slowly. As a result, a higher amount of a drug stays in your body for a longer time. This raises your risk for side effects.

**Dosage for seasonal affective disorder**

**Generic:** Bupropion

- **Form:** oral extended-release tablet
- **Strengths:** 100 mg, 150 mg, 200 mg, 300 mg
- **Form:** oral extended-release tablet
- **Strengths:** 100 mg, 150 mg, 200 mg, 300 mg

**Brand:** Aplenzin

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- **Strengths:** 150 mg, 300 mg

**Adult dosage (ages 18–64 years)***Generic extended-release*

- **Typical starting dosage:** 150 mg once daily.
- **Dosage increases:** After 7 days, the dosage may be increased to 300 mg, taken once daily in the morning.

*Aplenzin:*

- **Typical starting dosage:** 174 mg once daily.
- **Dosage increases:** After 7 days, the dosage may be increased to 348 mg, taken once daily.

*Wellbutrin XL:*

- **Typical starting dosage:** 150 mg once daily.
- **Dosage increases:** After 7 days, the dosage may be increased to 300 mg, taken once daily in the morning.

**Child dosage (ages 0–17 years)**

It has not been confirmed that this drug is safe and effective for use in people younger than 18 years.

**Senior dosage (ages 65 years and older)**

The kidneys of older adults may not work as well as they used to. This can cause your body to process drugs more slowly. As a result, a higher amount of a drug stays in your body for a longer time. This raises your risk of side effects.

**Dosage for smoking cessation****Generic:** Bupropion

- **Form:** oral extended-release tablet
- **Strengths:** 100 mg, 150 mg, 200 mg, 300 mg

**Adult dosage (ages 18–64 years)**

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- **Dosage increases:** On the fourth day, this is increased to 300 mg per day, taken as one 150-mg tablet twice daily. Wait at least 8 hours between each dose.
- **Maximum dosage:** 300 mg per day.

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## Take as directed

Bupropion oral tablet is used for long-term treatment of depression or SAD. It's used for short-term treatment when used to quit smoking.

This drug comes with serious risks if you don't take it as prescribed.

**If you stop taking the drug suddenly or don't take it at all:** Your symptoms of depression or SAD may get worse. Or you may not be able to quit smoking.

**If you miss doses or don't take the drug on schedule:** Your medication may not work as well or may stop working completely. For this drug to work well, a certain amount needs to be in your body at all times.

**If you take too much:** You could have dangerous levels of the drug in your body. Symptoms of an overdose of this drug can include:

- seizures
- hallucinations (seeing or hearing things that aren't real)
- loss of consciousness
- abnormal heart rhythms

If you think you've taken too much of this drug, call your doctor or local poison control center. If your symptoms are severe, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room right away.

**What to do if you miss a dose:** Take your dose as soon as you remember. But if you remember just a few hours before your next scheduled dose, take only one dose. Never try to catch up by taking two doses at once. This could result in dangerous side effects.

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Keep these considerations in mind if your doctor prescribes bupropion for you.

## General

- You can take this drug with or without food.
- Take this drug at the time(s) recommended by your doctor.
- You cannot cut or crush the tablet.

## Storage

- Store this drug at room temperature between 68°F and 77°F (20°C and 25°C).
- Keep bupropion away from light.
- Don't store this medication in moist or damp areas, such as bathrooms.

## Refills

A prescription for this medication is refillable. You should not need a new prescription for this medication to be refilled. Your doctor will write the number of refills authorized on your prescription.

## Travel

When traveling with your medication:

- Always carry your medication with you. When flying, never put it into a checked bag. Keep it in your carry-on bag.
- Don't worry about airport X-ray machines. They can't harm your medication.
- You may need to show airport staff the pharmacy label for your medication. Always carry the original prescription-labeled container with you.
- Don't put this medication in your car's glove compartment or leave it in the car. Be sure to avoid doing this when the weather is very hot or very cold.

## Clinical monitoring

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- **Liver function.** Blood tests can check how well your liver is working. If your liver isn't working well, your doctor may lower your dosage of this drug.
- **Mental health and behavioral problems:** You and your doctor should watch for any unusual changes in your behavior and mood. This drug can cause new mental health and behavior problems, or make problems you already have worse.
- **Blood pressure:** This drug may increase your blood pressure. Your doctor may check your blood pressure during treatment with this drug.

## Hidden costs

You may need to have blood tests during your treatment with this drug. The cost of these tests will depend on your insurance coverage.

## Prior authorization

Many insurance companies require a prior authorization for certain brands of this drug. This means your doctor may need to get approval from your insurance company before your insurance company will pay for the prescription.

## Are there any alternatives?

There are other drugs available to treat your condition. Some may be better suited for you than others. Talk with your doctor about other drug options that may work for you.

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