

## Medication Information

### Hypnotics

Ambien (zolpidem), Sonata (zaleplon), Rozerem (ramelteon), Lunesta (escopiclone)  
Hypnotics are a group of medications used to treat insomnia (sleep problems). The daily dosage varies among the different specific drugs.

**Precautions:** Insomnia is usually temporary, requiring treatment for only several days up to 1 or 2 weeks. Some people have chronic sleep problems that may require more prolonged use of sleep medicines. But when they are used every night for more than a few weeks, they may lose their effectiveness or result in withdrawal if suddenly stopped. They should be used with caution in people with a history of substance abuse and should never be taken along with alcohol or street drugs. Because hypnotics can cause drowsiness and dizziness, do not drive or operate heavy machinery after taking a dose until you know how you will be affected. If there is a possibility you may become pregnant or breast feed, consult with your physician.

**Common side effects include:** morning drowsiness, dizziness, and impaired memory. Other adverse effects not listed here may occur. Contact you physician if you develop any unusual or disturbing symptoms.

**Alternative Treatments:** Other medications used to treat insomnia include Trazodone, Elavil, Seroquel, Atarax, Benadrly, Vistiril, Phenergen, ProSom, benzodiazepines, and barbiturates. Some people have successfully used non-prescription medications, such as Tylenol-PM and Simply Sleep, non-pharmaceutical preparations, such as Melatonin and Valarian, or various self-relaxation techniques. Also, be sure to avoid any caffeine (coffee/soft drinks) or alcohol in the evening. Lack of sleep can exacerbate other psychiatric problems, such as anxiety and mood disorders.