

Medication Information

Abilify

Abilify (ariprazole) is an "atypical" or "second-generation" antipsychotic medication used in the treatment of psychotic disorders (such as schizophrenia) and as a mood stabilizer for patients with bipolar disorder. It may also be used to reduce agitation or aggressive behaviors occurring in various psychiatric conditions and to augment the treatment of resistant depression. The usual daily dose is between 2.5 and 30 mg.

Precautions: Abilify usually needs to be taken on a regular basis and should not be discontinued suddenly. Because it can cause dizziness, do not drive or operate heavy machinery until you know how you will be affected. It is best to avoid any use of alcohol or street drugs when taking this medication. If there is a possibility you may become pregnant or breast feed, consult with your physician. Because of an increased risk of death from cardiac and other causes in elderly patients, atypical antipsychotic medications are not approved for treating dementia-related psychosis in this population.

Common side effects include: headache, nausea, dizziness, fatigue, and restlessness. Other adverse effects not listed here may occur. Contact your physician if you develop any unusual or disturbing symptoms.

Alternative Treatments: Risperdal, Zyprexa, Seroquel, Geodon, neuroleptic drugs (such as Haldol, Thorazine, Mellaril, Prolixin, Navane), and Clozaril. Other mood stabilizers include: Lithium, Depakote, Tegretol, Trileptal, Lamictal, Topomax, Neurontin, and Gabitril. There are no "natural" substances that have demonstrated antipsychotic effects, but supplementary omega 3 fatty acids have been found helpful in some people with milder mood swings. Various forms of psychotherapy are often beneficial as adjunctive treatment. Left untreated, psychotic disorders and bipolar disorders tend to become more severe and chronic.