Citalopram is a Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitor (SSRI) and belongs to a group of medicines known as antidepressants. These medicines help to correct certain chemical imbalances in the brain that are causing the symptoms of your illness.

What is Citalopram used for?

Citalopram is used to treat the symptoms of depression and, when you are feeling better, to help prevent these symptoms recurring. Citalopram is also used for long-term treatment to help prevent the occurrence of new depressive episodes if you have recurrent depression. Citalopram treats depression and anxiety disorders. Like all medicines it can have unwanted effects. It is therefore important that you and your doctor weigh up the benefits and risks involved before you start taking this medicine.

Citalopram tablets contain lactose monohydrate. If you have been told by your doctor that you have an intolerance to glucose or one of the added sugars, consult your doctor before taking this medicine. Also, you should know that patients under 18 have an increased risk of side-effects such as fever, shivering, convulsions, severe skin rash and Stevens-Johnson syndrome.

Citalopram is a medicine that is very effective in the treatment of depression and, when you are feeling better, to help prevent these symptoms recurring. Citalopram is also used for long-term treatment to help prevent the occurrence of new depressive episodes if you have recurrent depression. Citalopram treats depression and anxiety disorders. Like all medicines it can have unwanted effects. It is therefore important that you and your doctor weigh up the benefits and risks involved before you start taking this medicine.

Some patients have reported (frequency not known)

- Thoughts of harming or killing themselves, see also section 2

- An increased risk of bleeding or bruising caused by a decrease in blood platelets (thrombocytopenia)

- Rash (hypersensitivity)

- Involuntary movements of the skin, legs, fingers and toes

- Rash (tinea)

- Ecchymosis

- Bleeding

- Black or blood-stained stools

- Difficulty in swallowing

- Involuntary movements

- Tinnitus

- Blurred vision

- Changes in blood pressure

- Changes in heart rate

- Fluid retention

- Unusual muscle movements or stiffness

- Changes in body weight

- Alopecia

- Fatigue

- Generalised pain

- Irritability

- Abnormal liver function tests

- Abnormal thyroid function tests

- Sleep disturbances (sleeplessness or somnolence)

- Loss of weight

- Tiredness

- For women, failure to reach an orgasm

- Muscle aches and pains

- Headache

- Difficulty in sleeping

- Sleepiness

- Nausea

- Vomiting

- Yawning

- Ringing in the ears (tinnitus)

- Problems concentrating

- Tingling or numbness in the hands or feet

- Tremor

- Decreased sex drive

- Anxiety

- Agitation

- Common: may affect up to 1 in 10 people

- Feeling sick (nausea)

- Dry mouth (a dry mouth increases the risk of tooth decay, so be sure to clean your teeth twice daily)

- Increased sweating

- Headache

- Difficulty in sleeping

- Sleepiness

The following side effects are often mild and usually disappear after a few days’ treatment.

If you have thoughts of harming or killing yourself at any time, contact your doctor or go to a hospital straight away.

Serious side effects

Stop taking citalopram and seek medical advice immediately if you have any of the following serious side effects:

- Difficulty in breathing

- Severe itching of the skin (with raised lumps)

- Dry mouth

- Loss of appetite

- Loss of weight

- Tiredness

- Confusion

- Changes in thinking or mood

- Decreased sex drive

- Dry mouth

- Involuntary movements of the skin, legs, fingers and toes

- Changes in body weight

- Headache

- Difficulty in sleeping

- Sleepiness

- Nausea

- Vomiting

- Yawning

- Ringing in the ears (tinnitus)

- Problems concentrating

- Tingling or numbness in the hands or feet

- Tremor

- Decreased sex drive

- Anxiety

- Agitation

- Unusual side effects may affect up to 1 in 100 people

- Bluish skin

- Enlarged eye pupils

- Dizziness

- Changes in blood pressure

- Fast heart beats

- Unconsciousness

- Sweating

- Changes in heart rhythm

- Symptoms of overdosage may include:

- Tiredness, confusion and twitching of your muscles. These may be signs of a low blood level of sodium (hyponatraemia).

- Your behaviour changes because you feel elated or over excited.

- You start having fits for the first time or fits that you have suffered from in the past become more frequent.

- You become more irritable because you have lost or gained weight.

- You have problems with urination, confusion, fainting or uncontrollable contractions of the muscle.

- These may be signs of anaemia (iron deficiency).

- These may be signs of low blood level of sodium (hypernatraemia).

- These may be signs of low blood level of potassium (hypokalaemia).

- These may be signs of low blood level of calcium (hypocalcaemia).

- These may be signs of low blood level of magnesium (hypomagnesaemia).

- These may be signs of low blood level of liver enzymes (eg, alanine transaminase, aspartate transaminase).

- These may be signs of low blood level of vitamin D (hypovitaminosis D).

- These may be signs of low blood level of vitamin B12 (pernicious anaemia).

- These may be signs of low blood level of vitamin B6 (deficiency of vitamin B6).

- These may be signs of low blood level of vitamin E (deficiency of vitamin E).

- These may be signs of low blood level of vitamin A (deficiency of vitamin A).

- These may be signs of low blood level of vitamin K (deficiency of vitamin K).

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