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Flupentixol tablets (Depixon, Fluanxol)

Flupentixol is prescribed to treat two different conditions. The brand called Depixon® is given to relieve symptoms of schizophrenia, and the brand called Fluanxol® is prescribed for depression. Ask your doctor if you are unsure why it has been prescribed for you.

It may slow your reactions and make you feel drowsy. If this happens, do not drive and do not use tools or machines.

Keep your regular appointments with your doctor. This is so your progress can be checked.

About flupentixol

Type of medicine	A thioxanthene medicine
Used for	Schizophrenia and other psychoses; depression
Also called	Depixon® (for psychoses); Fluanxol® (for depression)
Available as	Tablets

The brand of flupentixol called Depixol® is given to relieve the symptoms of [schizophrenia](#) and other similar mental health problems which affect the way you think, feel or behave. These problems are called psychoses. You may hear, see or sense things that are not there, or believe things that are not true, or feel unusually suspicious. Although the exact cause of psychoses is not known, it is thought to be associated with an altered balance of certain chemicals (neurotransmitters) in the brain. Flupentixol works by changing the balance of these chemicals. Taking flupentixol tablets will help relieve some of your symptoms, and will also help to prevent recurring episodes.

The brand of flupentixol called Fluanxol® is prescribed for people with [depression](#). The symptoms of depression can include low mood, poor sleep, and poor concentration. These are often eased by taking an antidepressant such as flupentixol.

Flupentixol is sometimes given as an injection rather than as tablets. For more information on this please see our medicine leaflet called '[Flupentixol long-acting injection](#)'.

Before taking flupentixol

Some medicines are not suitable for people with certain conditions, and sometimes a medicine may only be used if extra care is taken. For these reasons, before you start taking flupentixol it is important that your doctor knows:

- If you are pregnant or breastfeeding.
- If you have a heart condition or blood vessel disease.
- If you have liver, kidney, thyroid, or prostate problems.
- If you have breathing problems.
- If you have any of the following: epilepsy, diabetes, Parkinson's disease, raised pressure in your eye (glaucoma), or myasthenia gravis, a condition which causes muscle weakness.
- If you have ever had yellowing of your skin or of the whites of your eyes (jaundice) or a blood disorder.

- If you have a tumour on your adrenal gland, a condition called phaeochromocytoma.
- If you have a rare inherited condition called porphyria.
- If you have ever had an allergic reaction to a medicine.
- If you are taking or using any other medicines. This includes any medicines you are taking which are available to buy without a prescription, as well as herbal and complementary medicines.

How to take flupentixol

- Before you start this treatment, read the manufacturer's printed information leaflet from inside your pack. It will give you more information about the brand of flupentixol which you have been prescribed. It will also provide a full list of the side-effects which you may experience from taking the tablets.
- Your dose will depend upon the reason you have been prescribed flupentixol, so take the tablets exactly as your doctor tells you to. As a guide, the tablets are usually prescribed to be taken once or twice daily. Try to get into the habit of taking your doses at the same times each day, as this will help you to avoid missing any. You can take flupentixol tablets before or after food.
- Although flupentixol may make you feel drowsy, it can also have a stimulating effect in some people. Because of this, it is better to take your doses during the day before 4 pm, rather than in the evening.
- If you forget to take a dose, take it as soon as you remember unless it is nearly time for your next dose, in which case leave out the missed dose. Do not take two doses together to make up for a missed dose.

Getting the most from your treatment

- Keep your regular doctor's appointments so your progress can be checked. You may need to have some tests from time to time.
- If you have been prescribed flupentixol for schizophrenia, treatment is usually long-term. Keep taking the tablets until your doctor tells you otherwise. Stopping treatment suddenly can cause problems and your doctor will probably want you to reduce your dose gradually if a change in your treatment becomes necessary.

- If you have been prescribed flupentixol for depression, you may feel that it is not working for you straightaway. It can take a few days after starting treatment before the effect begins to build up, and 2-4 weeks before you feel the full benefit. Do not stop taking the tablets after a week or two, mistakenly thinking the medicine is not helping. You should expect that a course of treatment will last for several months after your symptoms have eased. This is normal and helps to prevent your symptoms from recurring.
- If you drink alcohol, ask your doctor for advice about drinking while you are on flupentixol. Alcohol will increase the chance that you experience side-effects and is unlikely to be recommended for you.
- Suicidal thoughts may be associated with depression and the medicines used to treat it. You may be particularly at risk of such thoughts early in the treatment for depression and after any dosage changes. You must tell your doctor straightaway if you have any thoughts of harming yourself.
- If you have diabetes check your blood sugar (glucose) levels regularly, as flupentixol can affect the levels of sugar in your blood.
- Flupentixol may cause your skin to become more sensitive to sunlight than normal. Use a sunscreen that protects against UVA light and has a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 15, especially in strong sunlight or until you know how your skin reacts. Do not use sunbeds.
- If you are having an operation, tell the person carrying out the treatment which medicines you are taking. This is important because flupentixol may interfere with the anaesthetic you receive.
- If you buy or take any 'over-the-counter' medicines, check with a pharmacist that they are suitable to take with flupentixol.

Can flupentixol cause problems?

Along with their useful effects, most medicines can cause unwanted side-effects although not everyone experiences them. The table below contains some of the most common ones associated with flupentixol. You will find a full list in the manufacturer's information leaflet supplied with your medicine. The unwanted effects often improve as your body adjusts to the new medicine, but speak with your doctor or pharmacist if any of the following continue or become troublesome.

F lupentixol side-effects	What can I do if I experience this?
Feeling dizzy or sleepy, blurred vision, slowed reaction time	If this happens, do not drive and do not use tools or machines. Do not drink alcohol
Headache	Drink plenty of water and ask your pharmacist to recommend a suitable painkiller. If the headaches continue, let your doctor know
Dry mouth	Try chewing sugar-free gum or sucking sugar-free sweets
Feeling shaky or restless, unusual or uncontrollable muscle movements	Speak with your doctor as soon as possible about any of these. Your treatment may need adjusting
Changes in weight, difficulty sleeping, mood changes, reduced sex drive, feeling sick (nausea), breast enlargement, production of breast milk, menstrual problems, fast heartbeats, constipation or diarrhoea, difficulty passing urine	Discuss these with your doctor if any become troublesome

Important: if you experience symptoms such as muscle stiffness, a very high temperature, feeling confused, a fast heartbeat and sweating, you should contact your doctor immediately. These may be signs of a rare but serious condition known as neuroleptic malignant syndrome.

If you experience any other symptoms which you think may be due to this medicine, speak with your doctor or pharmacist.

How to store flupentixol

- Keep all medicines out of the reach and sight of children.
- Store in a cool, dry place, away from direct heat and light.

Important information about all medicines

Never take more than the prescribed dose. If you suspect that you or someone else might have taken an overdose of this medicine, go to the accident and emergency department of your local hospital. Take the container with you, even if it is empty.

This medicine is for you. Never give it to other people even if their condition appears to be the same as yours.

Do not keep out-of-date or unwanted medicines. Take them to your local pharmacy which will dispose of them for you.

If you have any questions about this medicine ask your pharmacist.

If you experience side effects, you can report them online through the [Yellow Card website](#).

Further reading

- [Manufacturer's PIL, Fluanxol® 0.5 mg and 1 mg Tablets](#); Lundbeck Limited, The electronic Medicines Compendium. Dated January 2021.
- [Manufacturer's PIL, Depixol® 3 mg Tablets](#); Lundbeck Limited, The electronic Medicines Compendium. Dated January 2021.
- [Medicines Complete BNF 88th Edition](#); British Medical Association and Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, London.

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Last updated by: Michael Stewart, MRPharms 29/05/2023	
Peer reviewed by: Sid Dajani 29/05/2023	Next review date: 28/05/2026

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