

Amitriptyline

About: An older **antidepressant** first came to market in 1961. Part of a family of antidepressants called Tricyclics (TCAs). As newer drugs like Prozac came along these were safer so use of TCAs has reduced.

AKA: Elavil

Uses To treat abdominal pain, major depression, neuropathic pain, migraine. Used generally only when other treatments haven't worked.

Route and Doses: orally, up to a maximum of 100-150mg/day

Mechanism of action: Stops reuptake of serotonin and nor-adrenaline and its metabolites stops reuptake of nor-adrenaline too.

Misuse: Amitriptyline is not sought after as a drug of misuse. There's no good evidence of it having recreational value. More it seems to be a drug of desperation – if it's available and person feels need to take something it gets used. It may also have been taken in error – mistaken for a desired pill like diazepam. Highly dangerous in OD there's no antidote for it and so is really not a good drug to mess around with. No fun, dangerous side effects, no antidote.

Law: POM Not currently a CD in UK

Risks: Lots of side-effects and big risks of overdose. OD could be serotonin- or nor-adrenaline linked & could include very high heart rate, heart failure, convulsions, coma. 186 deaths in 2018 mention the drug, the same number as mention pregabalin

Interactions: will interact with any drugs using the same liver enzymes, drugs that elevate serotonin or adrenalin, or drugs that affect heart rhythm: anti-depressants; Buscopan, methadone, stimulants, Spice

