

# Celecoxib

Celecoxib (Celebrex) is an anti-inflammatory medicine that reduces pain (also called an NSAID, similar to ibuprofen). It also reduces depression, in both bipolar and non-bipolar depression, and this effect has been demonstrated in over a dozen well-designed studies.

## How it works

Celecoxib reduces inflammatory compounds in the body which are known to cause depression.

## How should I take it?

It can be taken once or twice a day and may be better tolerated if taken with food.

## What if I forget a dose?

If you miss a dose, wait until the next evening to take your next dose. Do not take a double dose to make up for a missed one.

## How long do I need to take it?

It can take 4-6 weeks to work. Talk to us about when to stop it as this will depend on your history and response to it.

## What happens if I stop it?

There are no known withdrawal problems from stopping it.

## Side effects

Celecoxib was well-tolerated and did not cause significant problems or side effects in any of the psychiatric studies. However, there are important risks that are associated with long-term use of the drug, and these risks are associated with all the drugs in this nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAID) class:

*Heart attacks, stroke:* increased risk of heart attacks and stroke. This risk may increase with duration of use. Those with heart disease are at higher risk.

*Stomach ulcers:* increased risk of stomach problems, including bleeding and ulcers. These events can occur at any time during use and

## Key Points

1. Celecoxib is well-tolerated but has important medical risks with long term use.
2. The risk of stomach ulcers can be reduced by taking it with a proton-pump inhibitor.

without warning symptoms. This risk is higher in the elderly. This risk can be reduced by taking it with a medicine that lowers acid in the stomach.

*Renal impairment:* increased risk of kidney problems.

## Interactions

Celecoxib has a few significant drug interactions (most importantly, it can raise lithium levels). If you are starting a new drug you can check for interactions at: [reference.medscape.com/drug-interactionchecker](http://reference.medscape.com/drug-interactionchecker)

## How to store and dispose of medication

- Keep out of the reach of children.
- Store away from heat, direct light and damp places.
- To safely dispose of unwanted pills: Do not pour in the toilet or sink (it will enter the water supply). To prevent children or pets from eating it, mix unwanted pills in a bag with a little water and inedible trash (such as coffee grounds or kitty litter) and throw in the trash.

### Cost and insurance coverage

Celecoxib is available as a generic. If you are paying for it out-of-pocket, you may find the lowest price at Costco (and you don't have to be a member to use their pharmacy) or through [www.goodrx.com](http://www.goodrx.com).

—Chris Aiken, MD, updated 6/25/2025

### Celecoxib

Brand	Celebrex
Dose range	100-400mg/day
Sizes	Caps: 50, 100, 200, 400mg
Release date	12/31/1998
FDA-approval	Acute pain, arthritis, menstrual symptoms