

Silexan

Silexan is a medication in Germany, where it has been used for many years to treat anxiety. In America Silexan is not available by prescription, but can be obtained over the counter as it is a natural extract of lavender.

Lavender's benefits for sleep and anxiety are widely known, though it's usually used in an aromotherapy form. The silexan form purifies the anti-anxiety ingredient into a potent tablet; so potent that it beat one of the most popular medications for anxiety (paroxetine or Paxil) in clinical tests.

People start to feel better on silexan within the first week of starting it, and these effects can continue to build over the first two months. It can also improve depression and sleep.

How does it work?

Silexan works through the serotonin-1A receptor in the brain, which is involved in depression and anxiety. Several medications also work through this receptor, including vilazodone (Viibryd), vortioxetine (Brintellix), buspirone (Buspar), aripiprazole (Abilify), lurasidone (Latuda), iloperidone (Fanapt), quetiapine (Seroquel), brexpiprazole and cariprazine. However, those medications do many more things in the brain (and have many more side effects than silexan which has almost none).

How should I take it?

Silexan was studied at 80mg and 160mg daily; both doses were effective and the higher dose lead to greater improvement.

The Silexan used in research was manufactured by the German company Schwabe Pharmaceuticals (www.schwabepharma.com).

A product available in the USA which contains Silexan is:

Nature's Way Calm Aid: 80mg (cost = 40cents/day for 80mg dose on Amazon or www.luckyvitamin.com).

For aromatherapy, any form of lavender can be used. It often comes as an oil that enters the air through reeds or other diffusers.

What if I forget a dose?

Take the missed dose as soon as you remember it. However, if it is almost time for the next dose, skip the missed dose and continue your regular dosing schedule. Do not take a double dose to make up for a missed one.



How long do I need to take it?

This depends on your diagnosis and which other medications you are taking.

What happens if I stop it?

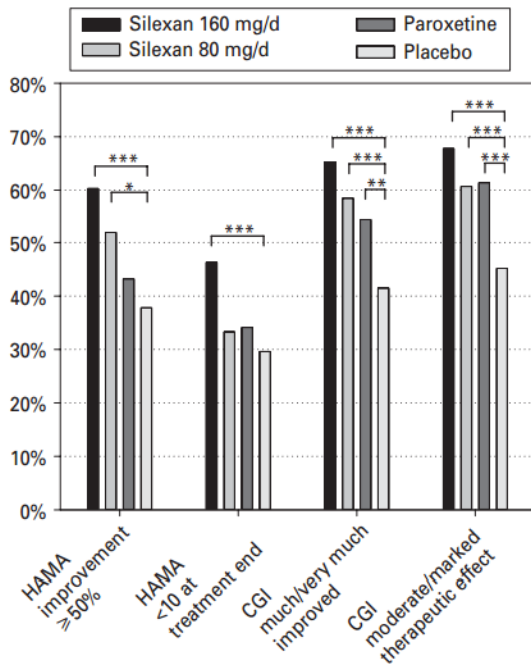
Silexan is non-addictive and does not have withdrawal problems

Side effects

Silexan did not have significant side effects and was as well tolerated as a placebo (sugar pill). Although the safety of silexan is not regulated by the FDA, in Germany silexan does have government-approval for anxiety (as the brand name Lasea).

Do not swallow lavender that isn't designed as an oral form (e.g. aromatherapy lavender).

(the black line) was more effective than the antidepressant paroxetine (paxil) and a sugar pill (the white and gray lines on the right end).



Where to purchase it

It is available on Amazon for around 40 cents per day. Other sources locally include www.luckyvitamin.com, Whole Foods and The Vitamin Shoppe.

—Chris Aiken, MD, updated 1/16/2016

This graph shows how lavender improved anxiety in 60-70% of people and fully resolved anxiety in 50%. You can see how silexan 160mg