

Oregon's Drug Review: Evidence on Triptans

Triptans treat migraine headaches. This includes migraines caused by menstruation. Migraines affect 18% of women and 6% of men. Triptans are used at the start of migraines to relieve pain, nausea, and light sensitivity. This family of drugs also reduces swelling in the brain. Triptans do not prevent migraines.

Which Drugs Were Included In This Review?

This review looked at the following triptans:

Oral <ul style="list-style-type: none">• almotriptan (Axert)• eletriptan (Relpax)• naratriptan (Amerge)• rizatriptan (Maxalt)• sumatriptan (Imitrex)• zolmatriptan (Zomig)	Nasal <ul style="list-style-type: none">• sumatriptan (Imitrex)• zolmatriptan (Zomig) Injectible <ul style="list-style-type: none">• sumatriptan (Imitrex)
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What Do These Drugs Have In Common?

- Avoid all triptans in heart conditions.
- No major differences exist among triptans for side effects.
- Not enough data exists to show differences in side effects by age, ethnicity, race, or sex.
- Do not use any triptan within 24 hours of using ergotamine.

What Are the Key Differences Among These Drugs?

- Nasal sumatriptan and zolmatriptan are effective, but there are no studies comparing them to each other.
- Injectable sumatriptan is effective, but there are no studies comparing injectible to the oral form.
- Lower the dose of rizatriptan to 5 mg when using propranolol.
- Do not use eletriptan within 72 hours of certain antibiotics, antidepressants, antifungals, and antivirals. Ask your doctor or pharmacist about these interactions.

Ask Your Health Care Practitioner During Your Next Visit:

- Am I taking the most effective drug for my condition?
- Are alternative drugs available that are equally effective?
- Are alternative drugs available that are effective, but less costly?
- Is there a generic available for my brand name drug?
- Will this drug interact with other medications I take?

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