

Acamprosate

Recovery-Focused Treatment for Alcohol Use Disorder

How can acamprosate help me cut down or stop drinking?

Acamprosate is used to help a person who has recently quit drinking alcohol continue to choose not to drink (remain abstinent from alcohol).

How does acamprosate work?

- Acamprosate acts in your brain to reduce your desire to drink alcohol.
- It can increase your ability to choose not to drink.

Will I need other forms of treatment?

A successful alcohol treatment program will include a combination of medicine and social support, like Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) meetings, counseling, individual or group therapy, and sometimes hospital treatment.

What do I need to know before starting acamprosate?

- Acamprosate works best in those who have stopped drinking for 3 to 4 days before starting this medication.
- Acamprosate will not treat or prevent alcohol withdrawal symptoms.
- If you have kidney problems, you will require a lower dose of medication.
- You should not take acamprosate if you are pregnant, planning on getting pregnant, or breastfeeding.
- Taking medicine for an alcohol use disorder is not substituting one drug for another.

How should I take acamprosate?

- The recommended dose of acamprosate is two 333 mg tablets (666 mg) three times a day.
- Acamprosate works better if you take it on an empty stomach. If it causes an upset stomach, you may take it with food.
- If you miss a dose, do not double up your next dose.



What are some of the side effects of acamprosate?

Common Side Effects	What Can I Do if I Experience This?
Mild Diarrhea	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drink plenty of water, but also fluids that contain sodium and potassium to prevent dehydration.• Eat soft, bland foods such as bananas, plain rice, toast, or crackers.
Nausea or Upset Stomach	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Take with food, and eat plain rice, toast, or crackers.• Avoid high fat, fried, or spicy foods.

Less common, but can be severe:

Tell your provider immediately if you have any of the following:

- Nervousness, difficulty sleeping, depressed mood, or thoughts of hurting yourself.
- Discuss any symptoms that you think may be due to this medication with your healthcare provider.

All medicines can have side effects. Not everyone has side effects though. They usually get better as your body gets used to the new medicine.

Talk with your provider or pharmacist if any of the above side effects trouble you.



How long do I have to take acamprosate?

- You and your doctor will decide on your treatment plan. Most people take acamprosate for at least 6 months and often longer.
- Do not stop your medication without talking to your healthcare provider first.

Contact info:

Veterans Crisis Line
1-800-273-TALK (8255) or Text - 838255