

Medications to avoid while taking Emsam or other MAOIs

Below are the most common medications that interact with Emsam. You can also check interactions at: <http://reference.medscape.com/drug-interactionchecker>

Antidepressants: SSRIs, eg, Prozac[®] (fluoxetine), Zoloft[®] (sertraline), Paxil[®] (paroxetine); SNRIs, eg, Effexor[®] (venlafaxine), Cymbalta[®] (duloxetine); TCAs, eg, Tofranil[®] (imipramine), Elavil[®] (amitriptyline); MAOIs, eg, Marplan[®] (isocarboxazid), Nardil[®] (phenelzine), Parnate[®] (tranylcypromine); Remeron[®] (mirtazapine); Wellbutrin[®] (bupropion); Pristiq, Zyban[®] (bupropion), The herbal supplement St. John's wort

Savella (for fibromyalgia)

BuSpar[®] (buspirone), an anxiety medicine

Amphetamines (also called stimulants): Ritalin, methyphenidate, adderall, concerta, focalin and the non-stimulant strattera (atomoxetine)

Certain pain medicines [eg, Demerol[®] (meperidine), Ultram[®] (tramadol), Dolophine[®] (methadone), Talwin[®] (pentazocine), or Darvon[®] (propoxyphene)]

Flexeril[®] or other medicines that contain cyclobenzaprine, a medicine used to treat muscle spasms;

Certain seizure medicines [eg, Tegretol[®] (carbamazepine) and Trileptal[®] (oxcarbazepine)]

Other medicines that contain selegiline (eg, Eldepryl[®])

Over the counter: Cold/cough preparations and over-the-counter diet pills or herbal weight loss products containing pseudoephedrine, phenylephrine, phenylpropanolamine, dextromethorphan, or ephedrine; herbal or dietary supplements that contain tyramine

The risk of taking these medications is severe high blood pressure **Hypertensive Crisis**. This risk is also present if certain foods are taken while on a higher dose of emsam (above 6mg/day; refer to food sheet if you are on that dose).

A hypertensive crisis is a severe increase in blood pressure that can lead to a stroke. Extremely high blood pressure — above 180/110 — damages blood vessels. They become inflamed and may leak fluid or blood. As a result, the heart may not be able to maintain adequate circulation of blood.

Signs and symptoms of an urgent hypertensive crisis may include:

- Elevated blood pressure
- Severe headache
- Severe anxiety
- Shortness of breath

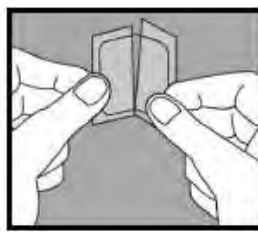
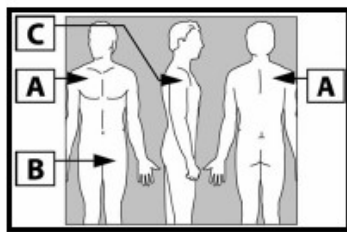
During an emergency hypertensive crisis, you may experience serious signs and symptoms, such as:

- Fluid in your lungs (pulmonary edema)
- Brain swelling or bleeding
- A tear in your aorta (aortic dissection)
- Heart attack
- Stroke

- Eclampsia, if you are pregnant.

If you experience a severe increase in your blood pressure (above 180/110 mm Hg), seek immediate medical attention. Treatment for hypertensive crisis may include oral medications, intravenous medications and hospitalization.

- Apply a new Emsam patch every day (24 hours). Change the patch at the same time each day (e. g. after a shower).
- Wear only one Emsam patch at a time.
- Apply an Emsam patch to dry, smooth skin on your (A) upper chest or back (below the neck and above the waist), (B) upper thigh, or (C) to the outer surface of the upper arm. If you experience skin irritation, change the site you apply it too each day. If skin problems persist talk to your doctor about a cream to reduce irritation.



Picture 2.
Removing the protective backing from an EMSAM patch.



Picture 3.
Applying an EMSAM patch.

- Apply an Emsam patch to an area of skin that is not hairy, oily, irritated, broken, scarred, or calloused. Do not place the patch where your clothing is tight, which could cause the patch to rub off.
- After you have selected the site for your patch, wash the area gently and well with soap and warm water. Rinse until all soap is removed. Dry the area with a clean dry towel.
- Just before you apply the patch, remove it from its sealed pouch. Do not keep or store the patch outside of the sealed pouch. Never cut an Emsam patch into smaller pieces to use.
- Remove half of the protective backing and throw it away. (See Picture 2) Try not to touch the exposed side (sticky side) of the patch, because the medicine could come off on your fingers. With your fingertips, press the sticky side of the patch firmly against the skin site that was just washed and dried. Remove the second half of the protective liner and press the remaining sticky side firmly against your skin. Make sure that the patch is flat against the skin (there should be no bumps or folds in the patch) and is sticking securely. Be sure the edges are stuck to the skin surface (See Picture 3).
- After you have applied the patch, wash your hands well with soap and water to remove any medicine that may have gotten on them. Do not touch your eyes until after you have washed your hands.
- After 24 hours, remove the patch slowly and carefully to avoid irritating the skin. Do not touch the sticky side. As soon as you have removed the patch, fold it so the sticky side sticks to itself.
- Throw away the patch so that children and pets cannot reach it (it still has some med in it)
- Gently wash the old application site with warm water and a mild soap to remove any sticky material (adhesive) that stays on your skin after removing the patch. A small amount of baby oil may also be used to remove any adhesive. You may need to use a medical adhesive removal pad that you can get from your pharmacist. Alcohol or other dissolving liquids such as nail polish remover may cause skin irritation and should not be used.
- Wash your hands with soap and water.

- If the patch becomes loose, press it back in place. If your Emsam patch falls off, apply a new patch to a new site and resume your normal schedule for changing patches.
- If you forget to change your patch after 24 hours, remove the old patch, put on a new patch in a different area and continue to follow your original schedule.

How Emsam Works

Emsam does not change who you are, although it may allow you freedom to develop in ways that those emotions had prevented. Some people say that they feel more like their usual self, or are better able to deal with stress, after taking Emsam. New research shows that it can prevent the damaging effects that stress and depression have on brain cells by enhancing brain growth in the hippocampus and amygdala, which are involved in mood and memory.



Before treatment: the effects of depression and stress have caused this nerve cell to shrink back like a tree with few branches.

After treatment: Antidepressant treatment has strengthened the roots and connections of the brain cell. The result is better communication within the brain and better stress management.

Affording the Medication

Emsam is brand-only; there may be coupons at www.emsam.com. There are generic MAOIs available, but they have more side effects. Contact us at auth@moodtreatmentcenter.com if there is trouble with the price or you need authorization from your insurance.

–Updated 7/27/2014 by Chris Aiken, MD