

Pain Medicine

Tramadol (Ultram, Ultracet)

Why is this medication prescribed?

Tramadol (Ultram, Ultracet) is used to relieve moderate to moderately severe pain. There are two commonly used formulations of tramadol that are commonly used: tramadol (Ultram) and tramadol mixed with Tylenol (Ultracet). Tramadol (Ultram, Ultracet) is in a class of medications called opiate agonists. It works by changing the way the body senses pain.

How should this medicine be used?

Tramadol comes as a tablet to take by mouth. The regular tablet is usually taken with or without food every 4-6 hours as needed. If you are taking tramadol on a schedule, take it at around the same times every day. Follow the directions on your prescription bottle carefully. Taking this medication in a way that is not recommended may cause serious side effects or death. Tramadol can be habit-forming. Call your doctor if you find that you want to take extra medication or if you notice any other unusual changes in your behavior or mood.

Do not stop taking tramadol without talking to your doctor. Your doctor will probably decrease your dose gradually. If you suddenly stop taking tramadol you may experience withdrawal symptoms such as nervousness; panic; sweating; difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep; hair standing on end; chills; nausea; diarrhea; or rarely, hallucinations (seeing things or hearing voices that do not exist).

What special precautions should I follow?

Before taking tramadol (Ultram, Ultracet),

- Tell your doctor if you are allergic to tramadol or other opiate pain or cough medications such as meperidine (Demerol), morphine (Avinza, Kadian, MS Contin), codeine (in some pain medications and cough syrups), hydrocodone (Vicodin), hydromorphone (Dilaudid), oxycodone (OxyContin, Percocet), or any other medications.
- Tell your doctor what prescription and nonprescription medications, vitamins, nutritional supplements, and herbal products you are taking or plan to take.
- Tell your doctor if you have or have ever had seizures.
- You should know that this medication may cause dizziness, lightheadedness, or make you drowsy and may affect your coordination. Do not drive a car until you know how this medication affects you.
- Talk to your doctor about the safe use of alcohol while you are taking this medication. Alcohol can make the side effects from tramadol worse.
- Talk to your doctor if you plan on drinking grapefruit juice while you are taking this medication.

What should I do if I forget a dose?

If your doctor has told you to take tramadol regularly, 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.

What side effects can this medication cause?

Tramadol may cause side effects. Tell your doctor if any of these symptoms are severe or do not go away:

- Dizziness
- Weakness
- Difficulty with sleep
- Headache
- Heartburn or indigestion
- Nausea
- Diarrhea or constipation
- Itching or rash
- Seizures
- Swelling of the face, throat, tongue, lips, eyes, hands, feet, ankles, or lower legs
- Hallucinations (seeing things or hearing voices that do not exist)

