

Dealing with Chronic Fatigue (CFS/ME)
in Young People

Amitriptyline



Amitriptyline is used for pain.

It also makes you sleepy, so can be particularly useful for young people who have pain and cannot sleep.

This is one of a series of information leaflets on managing CFS/ME in children and young people. These are also available on our website at www.rnhrd.nhs.uk.

For more information on our service, please contact Heather Hill on **01225 473425** at the Specialist Paediatric Chronic Fatigue/ME Service, Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases (NHS Foundation Trust), Upper Borough Walls, Bath BA1 1RL.

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Isn't it an antidepressant?

Amitriptyline is an antidepressant if it is prescribed in a much larger dose.

At this sort of dose, however, it is not being used as an antidepressant, and we think it probably works in a different way.

What is the dose?

This will depend on your age and your weight.

We usually start at between **5 - 10mg** and increase to up to **20mg**. Sometimes we will go higher than this, but not often.

You need to take it **once a day** and, as it will probably make you feel sleepy, we suggest you take it in the evening, 30 minutes before you go to bed.

Are there any serious side effects?

Side effects at this small dose are unusual, but sometimes young people tell us they feel generally unwell with it.

If this is the case we suggest: reducing the dose to **5mg a day**.

Then: increase it gradually to your original starting dose.

How long should I continue for?

Amitriptyline normally takes **7 to 21 days** before it starts to work.

If you have no benefit, we would normally increase your dose up to **20mg once a day**.

If you have had no benefit after **6 weeks** at this dose, we would normally suggest that you stop taking it.

Please discuss any changes in your medication with your doctor.

