

## Questions and Answers About October 2007 Product Information Update for Zyprexa® (olanzapine) -- A Guide for Patients

You may be aware of recent news about Zyprexa, the Lilly treatment for schizophrenia and bipolar disorder. Lilly has updated the Zyprexa label with additional safety information. This update enhances information already included in the Zyprexa label on the potential risks for weight gain and increased levels of blood sugar and lipids (fats in the blood) when taking Zyprexa. Among medicines in this class, Zyprexa appears to have a greater association with increased blood sugar than some other medicines. Consistent with expert guidelines, patients taking these types of medicines, including Zyprexa, should be monitored for changes in weight, blood sugar, and blood fats.

Zyprexa is an important treatment option for patients with schizophrenia or bipolar disorder, and its benefits and risks must be weighed individually for each patient when doctors and their patients are making treatment decisions. Every medicine offers benefits for many individuals along with the possibility of undesired effects. Talk with your doctor or members of your treatment team if you have questions about Zyprexa.

At Lilly, we believe our most important job is to protect patient safety, which means being completely upfront about potential side effects. Below are answers to some questions you may have. In addition, please feel free to call the Lilly Answers Center at 1-800-LILLYRX.

### **Q: Should I stop taking Zyprexa?**

**A:** As with any prescription medicine, you should not stop taking Zyprexa without talking to your doctor first. Medicine is an important part of treatment to help you manage your symptoms. Leaving your symptoms untreated could be harmful to your health and quality of life. If you have concerns, talk with your doctor. The decision about whether you should keep taking Zyprexa should be made based on discussion between you and your doctor.

### **Q: What are the signs of high blood sugar? What does the risk of increased blood sugar mean for me if I am starting or currently taking Zyprexa?**

**A:** Symptoms of increased blood sugar can include feeling very hungry or thirsty, needing to urinate more often than you usually do, and feeling unusually weak or tired. Tell your doctor if you develop symptoms of high blood sugar.

Zyprexa, like all other medicines in the same drug class, has a warning about an increased risk of high blood sugar. Among medicines in this class, Zyprexa appears to have a greater association with increased blood sugar than some other medications. People taking Zyprexa should be monitored regularly for signs of high blood sugar. People with diabetes or those who are at risk for getting diabetes who start taking Zyprexa should have their blood sugar tested at the beginning of treatment and regularly

during treatment. Diabetes is a medical condition that should be treated. You may be at risk for diabetes if you are overweight, have a family history of diabetes, or get little exercise. Patients who develop symptoms of high blood sugar during treatment should be tested for diabetes.

**Q: I heard that taking Zyprexa may affect lipid levels. What are lipids and what does that mean?**

**A:** Lipids are types of fats that naturally circulate in blood and are used as a source of fuel by the body. Although lipids are necessary for the body to function normally, too much fat in the blood can increase the risk of heart disease. Types of lipids include cholesterol and triglycerides.

People taking Zyprexa may have increased levels of lipids (fats) in their blood, which is a treatable medical condition. A doctor can monitor this with simple blood tests. People taking Zyprexa should have their lipid levels tested at the beginning of treatment and have follow-up tests during treatment.

**Q: Will I gain weight if I take Zyprexa?**

**A:** Patients who take Zyprexa may gain weight. You should have your weight checked regularly while taking Zyprexa. To minimize your potential for gaining weight, you should follow a healthy, balanced diet and get regular exercise. If you are already taking Zyprexa and weight gain is a concern, talk with your doctor or members of your treatment team about whether a change in lifestyle (such as diet and exercise), medicine, or some combination of these should be made.

**Q: How thoroughly has the safety of Zyprexa been studied?**

**A:** Many clinical trials involving thousands of patients have evaluated the safety of Zyprexa. More than 22 million patients have taken Zyprexa since it became available 11 years ago; it is currently on the market in 84 countries. Lilly has conducted and will continue to conduct regular safety analyses in order to provide updated information to doctors and patients to help them make the best possible treatment decisions.

For additional information about Zyprexa, see Important Safety Information on this site.