

The Carlat Psychiatry Report

Meridia (sibutramine) Fact Sheet

Manufacturer: Abbott

Indications:

- FDA approved 1997 for the treatment of obesity.

Mechanism: Works by inhibiting the reuptake of both norepinephrine and serotonin, thereby suppressing appetite.

Dosing:

- Supplied as 5 mg, 10 mg, and 15 mg capsules (not breakable).
- Start with 10 mg QD, titrate up to 15 mg QD if weight loss isn't adequate.
- No dosage adjustment required in mild to moderate renal or hepatic impairment.

Efficacy: One of the most effective weight loss agents, leading to 10 lbs. more weight loss than placebo over one year follow-up, according to meta-analyses.

Side Effects:

- Common: Headache, insomnia, dry mouth, constipation.
- Increased BP and heart rate; should not be used in patients with heart disease.

Drug-drug interactions:

- Since Meridia is a dual reuptake inhibitor, the manufacturer advises that it not be combined with other serotonin or dual reuptake inhibitors, because of a theoretical concern of serotonin syndrome.
- Contraindicated with MAOIs.
- Contraindicated for patients with anorexia or bulimia nervosa.

Pharmacokinetics:

- Metabolized to active metabolites (M1 and M2) by CYP 3A4, which are further metabolized by conjugation and hydroxylation.
- Half-life about 15 hours.

Laboratory monitoring: Regular monitoring of blood pressure and pulse is recommended. No actual lab work is required.