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on Drugs and Therapeutics

Comparison Table: Triptans

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Comparison Table: Triptans

Drug	Almotriptan	Eletriptan	Frovatriptan	Naratriptan	Rizatriptan ¹	Sumatriptan ²	Zolmitriptan
Brand Name (Manufacturer)	Only available generically; previously <i>Axert</i>	<i>Relpax</i> (Pfizer), and generics	Only available generically; previously <i>Frova</i>	Only available generically; previously <i>Amerge</i>	<i>Maxalt</i> , <i>Maxalt MLT</i> (Organon), and generics <i>RizaFilm</i> (Gensco)	<i>Imitrex</i> (GSK), and generics <i>Onzetra Xsail</i> (Avanir) <i>Tosymra</i> (Upsher-Smith) <i>Zembrace SymTouch</i> (Upsher-Smith)	<i>Zomig</i> (Amneal), and generics
Route of Administration	Oral	Oral	Oral	Oral	Oral	Oral; SC; intranasal	Oral; intranasal
Formulations	6.25, 12.5 mg tabs	20, 40 mg tabs	2.5 mg tabs	1, 2.5 mg tabs	Generic: 5, 10 mg tabs, ODT Maxalt: 10 mg tabs Maxalt MLT: 10 mg ODT RizaFilm: 5, 10 mg orally disintegrating films	Imitrex and generics – Oral: 25, 50, 100 mg tabs SC: 6 mg/0.5 mL vials, 4, 6 mg/0.5 mL autoinjector and refill cartridge Nasal spray: 5, 20 mg/0.1 mL Onzetra Xsail: 11 mg nasal powder caps Tosymra: 10 mg nasal spray Zembrace SymTouch: 3 mg/0.5 mL SC autoinjector	Oral: 2.5, 5 mg tabs, ODT Intranasal spray: 2.5, 5 mg/0.1 mL
Onset of Action	30-60 min	30-60 min	~2 hrs	1-3 hrs	30-60 min	Tabs: 30-60 min SC: ~10 min Intranasal: 10-15 min	Tabs: 30-60 min Intranasal: 10-15 min
Elimination Half-life	3-4 hrs	~4 hrs	~26 hrs	~6 hrs	2-3 hrs	~2-2.5 hrs	2-3 hrs
Usual Adult Dosage	6.25 or 12.5 mg; can be repeated after 2 hrs (max 25 mg/day)	20 or 40 mg; can be repeated after 2 hrs (max 80 mg/day)	2.5 mg; can be repeated after 2 hrs (max 7.5 mg/day)	2.5 mg; can be repeated after 4 hrs (max 5 mg/day)	Tabs and ODT: 5 or 10 mg (max 30 mg/day) Orally disintegrating films: 10 mg PO; can be repeated after 2 hrs (max 30 mg/day)	Imitrex, and generics Oral: 50 or 100 mg PO; can be repeated after 2 hrs (max 200 mg/day) SC: 6 mg SC; can be repeated after 1 hr (max 12 mg/day) Nasal spray: 5, 10, or 20 mg; can be repeated after 2 hrs (max 40 mg/day) Zembrace SymTouch: 3 mg SC; can be repeated after 1 hr Tosymra: 10 mg intranasally, can be repeated after 1 hr (max 30 mg/day) Onzetra Xsail: 22 mg intranasally; can be repeated after 2 hrs (max 44 mg/day)	2.5 or 5 mg PO or intranasally; can be repeated after 2 hrs (max 10 mg/day)
Comments	- Short-acting oral triptans (almotriptan, eletriptan, rizatriptan, sumatriptan, zolmitriptan) are similar in their efficacy and speed of onset. - Longer-acting oral triptans (frovatriptan, naratriptan) have a slower onset of action and lower initial response rate than other triptans but are better tolerated. - SC sumatriptan is faster-acting and more effective than other triptans but causes more adverse effects. - Intranasal triptans are faster-acting than oral triptans but may have unpleasant taste; efficacy may be dependent on GI absorption of swallowed portion of dose. - ODT and orally disintegrating films may be taken without water.						

Drug	Almotriptan	Eletriptan	Frovatriptan	Naratriptan	Rizatriptan ¹	Sumatriptan ²	Zolmitriptan
Class Adverse Effects	Tingling, flushing, dizziness, drowsiness, fatigue, and heaviness or tightness in the chest (can occur with any triptan, but most frequently with SC sumatriptan); angina, myocardial infarction, cardiac arrhythmia, stroke, seizure, and death have occurred rarely; peripheral vascular ischemia, gastrointestinal vascular ischemia and infarction, and Raynaud phenomenon have also occurred.						
Other Adverse Effects	Most common (≥1%): nausea, dry mouth, paresthesia	Most common (≥5%): asthenia, nausea, dizziness, somnolence	Most common (≥2%): dizziness, headache, paresthesia, dry mouth, dyspepsia, fatigue, hot or cold sensation, chest pain, skeletal pain, flushing	Most common (≥2%): paresthesia, nausea, dizziness, drowsiness, throat or neck pain/pressure	Most common (≥5%): asthenia/fatigue, somnolence, pain or pressure sensation, dizziness	Most common (≥2%): paresthesia, warm/cold sensation, chest/neck/throat/jaw pain, tightness, or pressure, vertigo, fatigue, burning at injection site (SC formulation), abnormal taste, nasal discomfort, rhinorrhea, rhinitis (intranasal formulation)	Most common (≥5%): neck/throat/jaw pain, tightness, or pressure, dizziness, paresthesia, asthenia, somnolence, warm/cold sensation, nausea, heaviness sensation, dry mouth, abnormal taste (intranasal formulation)
Class Drug Interactions	A triptan should generally not be used within 24 hours of a different triptan or an ergot because vasoconstriction could be additive; cases of serotonin syndrome reported with SSRIs and SNRIs, but risk is likely low.						
Other Drug Interactions	CYP3A4 inhibitors ³ can increase serum concentrations; dose adjustment is recommended	Propranolol can increase serum concentrations. CYP3A4 inhibitors ³ can increase serum concentrations; contraindicated for use within 72 hours of treatment with a strong CYP3A4 inhibitor	Propranolol can increase serum concentrations	None	MAO inhibitors can increase serum concentrations; contraindicated for use within 2 weeks after an MAO-A inhibitor. Propranolol can increase serum concentrations; dosage adjustment is recommended (orally disintegrating films are contraindicated)	MAO inhibitors can increase serum concentrations; contraindicated for use within 2 weeks after an MAO-A inhibitor	MAO inhibitors can increase serum concentrations; contraindicated for use within 2 weeks after an MAO-A inhibitor. Propranolol and cimetidine can increase serum concentrations; dosage adjustment recommended with cimetidine
Usual Pediatric Dosage	12-17 yrs: 6.25 or 12.5 mg; can be repeated after 2 hrs (max 25 mg/day)	Not FDA-approved for pediatric use	Not FDA-approved for pediatric use	Not FDA-approved for pediatric use	6-17 yrs: 5 mg (<40 kg) or 10 mg (≥40 kg)	Not FDA-approved for pediatric use	Oral: not FDA-approved for pediatric use Intranasal: (≥12 yrs): 2.5 or 5 mg; can be repeated after 2 hrs (max 10 mg/day)

Drug	Almotriptan	Eletriptan	Frovatriptan	Naratriptan	Rizatriptan ¹	Sumatriptan ²	Zolmitriptan
Adult Dosage in Renal Impairment	Severe (CrCl 10-30 mL/min): 6.25 mg initial dose	No dosage adjustment needed	No dosage adjustment needed	Severe (CrCl <15 mL/min): contraindicated Mild-moderate: 1 mg initial dose (max 2.5 mg/day)	No dosage adjustment needed	No dosage adjustment needed	No dosage adjustment needed
Adult Dosage in Hepatic Impairment	6.25 mg starting dose (max 12.5 mg/day)	Severe: not recommended	Severe: caution recommended	Severe: contraindicated Mild-moderate: 1 mg starting dose (max 2.5 mg/day)	No dosage adjustment needed	Mild-moderate (oral): max single dose 50 mg Severe (oral, intranasal, and SC): contraindicated	Moderate-severe (oral): 1.25 mg (max 5 mg/day) (intranasal): not recommended
Adult Dosage Adjustment for Drug Interactions	With a strong CYP3A4 inhibitor ³ : 6.25 mg starting dose (max 12.5 mg/day); avoid strong CYP3A4 inhibitors in patients with renal or hepatic impairment	With a strong CYP3A4 inhibitor: avoid use within 72 hrs of treatment	No dosage adjustment needed	No dosage adjustment needed	With propranolol: 5 mg tabs or ODT (max 15 mg/day); oral disintegrating films are contraindicated	No dosage adjustment needed	With cimetidine: 2.5 mg (max 5 mg/day)
Cost⁴:	Generic: \$33.40	Generic: \$17.80 <i>Relpax</i> : \$80.80	Generic: \$17.10	Generic: \$4.60	Generic: \$2.10 (tabs) \$1.90 (ODT) <i>Maxalt</i> : \$46.40 <i>Maxalt MLT</i> : \$46.40 <i>RizaFilm</i> : \$3.70	Generic: \$1.40 (tabs) \$15.30 (vial) \$79.20 (autoinjector) \$37.50 (nasal spray) <i>Imitrex</i> : \$75.70 (tabs) \$241.30 (autoinjector) <i>Onzetra Xsail</i> : \$117.50 <i>Tosymra</i> : 113.10 <i>Zembrace SymTouch</i> : \$200.40	Generic: \$5.70 (tabs) \$6.50 (ODT) \$69.40 (nasal spray) <i>Zomig</i> : \$129.40 <i>Zomig</i> nasal spray: \$97.80

ODT = orally disintegrating tablets; SC = subcutaneous; MAO = monoamine oxidase

1. Also available in combination with naproxen (*Treximet* – Pernix).

2. Also available in combination with a rapid-acting formulation of meloxicam (*Symbravo* – Axsome).

3. Inhibitors and inducers of CYP enzymes, P-glycoprotein, and other transporters. Med Lett Drugs Ther 2023 January 25 (epub). Available at: www.medicalletter.org/downloads/CYP_PGP_Tables.pdf.

4. Approximate WAC for one dose at the lowest usual adult dosage. WAC = wholesaler acquisition cost or manufacturer's published price to wholesalers; WAC represents a published catalogue or list price and may not represent an actual transactional price. Source: AnalySource® Monthly. August 5, 2026. Reprinted with permission by First Databank, Inc. All rights reserved. ©2026. www.fdbhealth.com/policies/drug-pricing-policy.