

What are the possible side effects of phentermine and/or weight loss and how should I handle them?

Dry Mouth and Increased Thirst

- Make sure to drink at least 64oz of water per day. To help remember to get water in during the day:
 - Set reminders on your phone to drink!
 - Keep a filled water bottle in your bag or at your desk.
 - Prepare and fill water bottles before going to bed at night and have them cool and ready to grab from the refrigerator before heading out the next morning.
 - Track your fluid intake using the WW app and set goals and reminders there too.
- Try to avoid caffeinated beverages, which can be dehydrating.
- Add lemon or lime slices to your water to make it taste better and help stimulate saliva.
- If the above tips don't help, you can try chewing sugar-free gum or pop in an occasional sugar-free lemon candy.
- If your thirst becomes severe and is accompanied by more frequent urination or other symptoms that are unusual for you, please notify one of the LEAP study team members or your normal health care providers.

Constipation

Signs of constipation

- 3 or fewer bowel movements per week
- Straining during bowel movement at least 1 out of 4 times
- Hard or lumpy stool at least 1 out of 4 bowel movements
- A sense of incomplete evacuation after a bowel movement

Symptoms requiring URGENT follow-up

- Severe abdominal pain or cramping
- Severe, unexplained nausea or vomiting
- Severe rectal bleeding

To PREVENT constipation, the following should be done daily:

- Exercise at least 30 min/day
- Hydrate with at least 64 oz of water/day

For episodes of MILD or CHRONIC constipation (in addition to above):

- Use a fiber additive daily (ex. Metamucil Clear & Natural, or Benefiber)
- Use a stool softener, Docusate with Senna, daily

For SEVERE episodes of constipation, try ONE of the following (in addition to above):

- Milk of Magnesia (Take 1 dose. If no BM in 4 hours, take 2nd dose)
- Miralax (follow dosing guidelines on package)
- Magnesium Citrate (follow dosing guidelines on package)

If constipation is not relieved in 48 hours after implementing these instructions, please contact your LEAP Study coordinator.



Insomnia

- Try to avoid caffeine within 6-8 hours of bed time, or eliminate it completely if you are still having trouble.
- Set up a bedtime routine that allows you to relax and process your day before hitting the sack.
- Sometimes insomnia is due to unresolved stress or worries bubbling to the surface when we finally take our foot off the gas at the end of the day. Making time to focus, breathe and relax for 30 minutes to an hour before bedtime can help. You could even use this time to journal and write about good and bad things that happened that day.
- Make your bedroom a “no phone zone”! Staring at a screen (TV, computer, tablet or phone) can confuse our brains into thinking that it’s still daytime, making it hard to feel sleepy. Try to turn off all devices for that last 30-60 minutes before going to bed and give your brain time to realize that the sun has gone down.
- Try to create a quiet, cool and calm place for sleeping. If it’s too hectic in your house for quiet, you can try to create it using ear plugs.
- Avoid lengthy naps or oversleeping in the morning – try to get into a routine of getting up in the mornings and staying awake all day. This will make it easier for your body to fall and stay asleep at night.
- When possible, get regular physical activity during the day, ideally getting fresh air and exposure to sunlight. This will help your body get a clear idea of day versus night and leave you more ready for sleeping when it gets dark outside.
- Talk to your LEAP study team about whether you may need to change the schedule of how you are taking your study medicine, for example by moving it earlier in the day.



Feeling Jittery or Anxious

- Avoid taking your medicine with caffeinated beverages
- Establish a routine of calming exercises that can help you re-focus, breathe and relax
- Consider whether increased stress or other issues might be leading to your feelings of anxiety. If so – seek help for stress management and identify ways to build in time to unwind with pleasurable and relaxing activities.
- Again, if you’re still struggling with this issue, let your LEAP study team know and the doctor may choose to make a change to how and when you take your study medicine.

Headache

- Make sure you are getting enough sleep and water – these are common causes of headache.
- If you've recently completely eliminated caffeine, that can cause a few days of headache. It will get better with time!
- If your headache is more likely after a long day of looking at your computer or reading, consider whether it might be time to have your vision re-checked. Straining your eyes due to lack of appropriate eyewear is a common cause of headaches.
- Consider whether your headache could be due to muscle tension in your neck and upper back – this is especially possible if you've recently started a new strength or resistance workout routine. If so, try some simple stretches to see if that relieves the pain.
- If you continue to have headaches despite addressing these factors, please let your LEAP study team know and a visit may be scheduled to discuss with the doctor
- If your headache is severe, associated with vomiting, changes in vision or any other symptoms that are severe and new for you, please seek urgent medical attention.

Heart Palpitations or Fast Heart Beat

- **If your symptoms are MILD**, meaning you occasionally feel a brief flutter or single “skipped beat” in your chest (e.g. once every few days) and this is not impacting your activities, and you otherwise feel fine:
 - Please notify your medical provider or the LEAP study team at your next regularly scheduled appointment.
 - In these cases, you can also make sure to cut back on caffeine, make sure you're getting plenty of sleep and staying hydrated, and minimizing stress as much as possible.
- **If your symptoms are MODERATE or SEVERE** meaning that your flutters or skipped beats become more frequent (e.g. daily or multiple times per day), or if the episodes last longer (e.g. more than a few seconds to a minute), or are associated with chest pain, shortness of breath, dizziness, decreased ability to be active, or feeling faint then you should seek medical attention right away.
- **What if your Apple Watch, FitBit or other Fitness Tracking Device notifies you of increased heart rate?**
 - Make sure that the reading is correct – sometimes devices can detect what they think is a fast heart rate but actually is related to movement of the device or other interference.
 - If you are not having any symptoms, and the increase is within a normal range for you given the activity you're doing (e.g., if your normal resting heart rate is 75 and it goes to 120 while exercising, returning to mid-70's when you finish), then you do not need to take any action.
 - If you are not having any symptoms, but the increase appears to be *abnormal* for you (e.g., your normal resting heart rate is 80 and it suddenly becomes sustained at 120), please reach out to the LEAP study team immediately.
 - If you are having symptoms such as chest pain, dizziness, palpitations, shortness of breath or feeling faint, and your fitness tracker also notifies you of a high heart rate, you should seek immediate medical attention.



Changes in Libido/Relationship Concerns

Weight loss and changes in your diet and exercise can often cause changes in your sexual drive, possibly impacting your relationship. If you have changes in libido that are concerning to you or your partner, please notify the LEAP clinician at your next scheduled visit.



Importantly – if you are a woman or trans-man with reproductive potential, and become newly sexually active during the LEAP study, please notify us right away so we can make sure that your birth control plans are aligned with our safety protocols for the study.

Any Other Concerns

We understand that, during the course of the LEAP trial, you may experience other symptoms or medical concerns. These could include changes in existing health problems like your blood pressure, diabetes or other conditions. You may have questions about whether these changes could be related to your weight loss or study medication.

- **MILD other symptoms:** If you have a new, mild symptom that is out of the ordinary for you and not covered already in the materials you've received from LEAP, please call your local LEAP study team to determine whether a phone or in-person visit with the LEAP doctor is needed to evaluate your concern.
- **MODERATE or SEVERE other symptoms:** If you have a new, moderate or severe symptom that is out of the ordinary for you (e.g. severe fluctuation in blood pressure or heart rate, new chest pain, shortness of breath, fainting), please promptly seek medical attention with your regular medical provider or in an urgent care or emergency room.

No Side Effects? What if I am taking my study drug and not having any of these symptoms? Does it mean I'm taking placebo?

The presence or absence of side effects is NOT an indicator of whether you're getting phentermine or placebo!

Patients who are taking placebo will often experience and report side effects. These placebo effects could be due to something else entirely – like change in diet, sleep or even weight loss itself.

If you don't experience these side effects with your LEAP study medication, it doesn't mean that you are receiving placebo! Not all patients who take phentermine notice side effects. So, if that happens to be the case for you, that is good news!

