



Neudexta, dextromethorphan and quinidine

Information Sheet for patients and prescribers

What is dextromethorphan + quinidine (compounded)?

The compound of these two medications is equivalent to Neudexta, an FDA-approved prescription medication not currently available in New Zealand.

It is mainly used for pseudobulbar affect (PBA) - uncontrolled laughing or crying and emotional responses that do not match how you feel, which can be experienced by people living with motor neurone disease (MND). It may also help with difficulties with speech and swallowing, although the research on this is less certain.

In New Zealand, some GPs or neurologists may prescribe these two medicines together.

This compound is only available by prescription, through [CompoundLabs](#), not your community pharmacy where you normally get your other medications. It is not a Pharmac-funded or Medsafe-registered medication.

This treatment combines two medicines:

- Dextromethorphan – acts on the brain to help regulate emotional expression
- Quinidine – increases the effect of dextromethorphan by slowing its breakdown.
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Why is it used in MND?

Main use (best evidence):

- Pseudobulbar affect (PBA) - uncontrolled laughing or crying and emotional responses that do not match how you feel.

Possible additional benefits (less certain):

- Speech (dysarthria)
- Swallowing.

Is it available in New Zealand?

- Not Pharmac-funded and not a registered medicine

- Available only via [CompoundLabs](#) compounding pharmacy, ie. Not a community- based pharmacy where you get your other medications
- Requires prescription (GP or neurologist)
- Specialist initiation recommended.

Important safety information

Heart rhythm risk:

- QT prolongation risk
- Avoid in known QT prolongation or cardiac disease
- ECG should be performed prior to starting and should be repeated.

Drug interactions:

- Antidepressants (SSRIs, TCAs)
- Antipsychotics
- Heart medications
- Codeine, tramadol
- Serotonergic drugs.

Who should NOT take this medicine?

- People with significant heart rhythm problems
- People taking interacting medications that cannot be adjusted
- People with an allergy to the components.

What do I need to know as a prescriber?

- Indication: Pseudobulbar affect
- Mechanism: NMDA antagonist + CYP2D6 inhibition
- Dose: 20/10 mg OD → BD
- Risks: QT prolongation, interactions
- Monitoring: medication review + ECG
- Unapproved medicine – informed consent required.

Key message

This medicine can be helpful for emotional lability in MND but requires careful prescribing, interaction checking, and monitoring.

For more information contact:

1. Your neurologist regarding whether this medication is right for you.
2. NZ [CompoundLabs](#) for medication related queries (e.g. cost, payment options, shipping etc).

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