

# WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT **TIANEPTINE**



Tianeptine (ti-a-nep-tine) is a substance found in over-the-counter products advertised as dietary supplements and cognitive function enhancers. They are manufactured to mimic the effects of more well-known controlled substances such as marijuana and opioids. People may abuse tianeptine products because of their opioid-like effects and claims they improve cognition and treat depression and anxiety. Often referred to as “gas station drugs” because people frequently purchase them there, tianeptine products are also available online. It is sold in the US under the names Zaza and Tianna Red. Globally, it is often marketed under the names Coaxil, Stablon, and Tatinol.

## What are the side effects?

The FDA recently identified cases in which people abusing or misusing tianeptine products alone or with other drugs (including antidepressants and anti-anxiety medications) experienced serious and harmful side effects.

- Agitation
- Drowsiness
- Confusion
- Sweating
- Rapid heartbeat
- High blood pressure
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Slowed/stopped breathing
- Coma
- Death

## Who is at risk?

The FDA warns that tianeptine can be highly addictive. Those with a history of opioid use disorder are particularly at risk. Tianeptine also carries a risk of suicidal ideation or behavior for children, adolescents, and young adults. That risk is compounded by the accessibility of tianeptine products. They can be legally purchased by anyone—even individuals under 18.

## What happens when someone takes tianeptine?

Tianeptine appears to affect a person’s opioid receptors, producing symptoms similar to an opioid overdose. Health care professionals suggested naloxone and other opioid antagonists as treatment for tianeptine poisoning with documented reports of success.



## How is the FDA responding to the issue?

The FDA is alerting consumers that tianeptine is not a safe food additive or a dietary ingredient. They sent warning letters to companies illegally marketing tianeptine products as dietary supplements and issued import alerts to help stop tianeptine shipments at US borders.

*Part of North Carolina local government, Vaya Health is a managed care organization with more than 50 years of experience in the public health system that serves 32 counties in the state. Vaya’s specialty is helping individuals with needs related to mental health, substance use disorders, intellectual/developmental disabilities, and traumatic brain injuries.*