WHAT IS MODAFINIL?

By now you’ve probably heard about Modafinil. It’s slowly crept into mainstream news over the past few years, now popular in universities, on Wall Street, and even amongst E-sports gamers.

So what is this substance that can keep a sleep-deprived person up and functioning better than everyone else? Modafinil is what’s called a eugeroic, or a psychoactive drug primarily used to enhance wakefulness in individuals with sleep disorders or nighttime work schedules.

If you haven’t used Modafinil, you may wonder if it actually works, and how it compares to stimulants like caffeine and Aderrall. The truth is that Modafinil is an increasingly popular wakefulness-promoting agent that has been in use for over 20 years now.

Michel Jouvet, a medical professor, first developed it in France through a series of chemical tests during the 1970s. First utilized as Adrafinil, a less effective precursor of the drug, Modafinil was discovered later in 1994, when it effectively replaced the former owing to efficacy and fewer side effects.

Today, Modafinil is used the world over to suppress sleep as well as treating a vast array of medical conditions such as ADHD, depression, and stress, among others.

How It Works

It is important to note that unlike caffeine, Modafinil works by affecting the brain only, rather than the body as a whole. As such, most of its effects are “felt” in the brain and the lack of need to sleep is all you may actually feel after taking it.

What’s nice about eugeroic drugs like Modafinil is that their sole function is to keep us awake, rather than cause general dopamine stimulation. By concentrating on the wakefulness aspect by itself, there are less side effects like jitters and anxiety.
Modafinil has varying effects on the brain and particularly the secretion of sleeping hormones. For starters, it prevents the re-uptake of noradrenaline, a neuro-transmitter that triggers the sleep-response mechanism. It also slows down the release of GABA, a neuro-transmitter secreted to prepare the brain and body for sleeping.

In addition, Modafinil may also affect orexin receptors, which are specific receptors involved with wakefulness. When activated, these receptors cause a release of dopamine and norepinephrine and cause stimulatory physical effects.

**How It’s Used**

Modafinil is used primarily to enhance wakefulness but also to suppress and remedy a host of other medical conditions. Here is an overview of some of its uses:

It is used to prevent sleeping for up to 31-40 hours as compared to the standard 16 hours for most people. However, unlike other stimulants, it also enhances cognitive functioning, eliminating the low levels of creativity and mental performance associated with sleep deprivation.

The FDA has to this end, approved it to treat shift obstructive sleep apnea, narcolepsy, and work sleep disorder (sleepiness during scheduled waking hours and difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep during scheduled sleeping hours in people who work at night or on rotating shifts).

Productivity hacker and entrepreneur Sebastian Marshall has this to say about Modafinil:

*The biggest effect is that it obliterates the need to sleep. It’s just gone. You don’t need to sleep on the stuff.*

**Important:** Even though Modafinil removes the urge to sleep, it is not a replacement for getting regular, natural sleep. Don’t let this drug become a crutch for bad habits; rather, use it to nudge you down a path of building healthy, sustainable habits over the long term.
– Improving Cognitive Functioning

Modafinil is also a smart drug/cognitive enhancer in addition to being a wakefulness enhancing agent. As such, it is used by many people to boost mental performance and cognitive functioning for purposes such as improving pattern recognition, digit manipulation, and digit span.

Further, Modafinil improves memory and enhances mood, general alertness and cognition.

– Managing And Suppressing ADHD

Attention Deficit Hyper-activity Disorder is a common condition in kids, which tends to persist until adolescence or even adulthood. It is characterized by hyper-activity, inability to focus/pay attention, and difficulty controlling one’s behavior.

While Modafinil has been shown to have varying effects when it comes to treating ADHD in adults, it is very successful with kids and may suppress the condition as the child grows into adulthood.

– Depression And Anxiety

It has also been shown to suppress anxiety while also uplifting moods for people dealing with depression. It achieves this by inducing positive thinking, as most users testify, while also stabilizing the person’s mood swing through the regulation of hormones produced in the brain.

Other conditions treated using Modafinil include bi-polar disorder, Parkinson’s disease, and schizophrenia, among others.

Dosage

Modafinil tablets usually come in 100mg and 200mg tablets, with the latter being more popular. To this end, dosage generally varies from 100mg to 200mg per day, but this may change depending on the prescription administered by your doctor.
For those taking modafinil without prescription, it is advised to begin by taking the 100mg pill in the morning when you intend to enhance wakefulness. This will allow your body to adapt to the drug before you can move to the standard 200mg.

With time, you can upgrade to the 200mg when your body has adapted to the drug or if you are looking for greater effects. However, this dosage should never be surpassed unless with the advice of a doctor, as this may increase the potential of side effects or have far-reaching sleep deprivation effects.

**Tip:** while prescription is recommended on a daily basis, this is just for standard measurement – Modafinil should only be taken on the days you intend to keep awake for longer, or else you will have to deal with sleep deprivation for several consecutive days.