

Medication Information

ANTIDEPRESSANT MEDICATION INFORMATION

SSRIs: Prozac (fluoxetine), Paxil (paroxetine), Zoloft (sertraline), Celexa (citalopram), Lexapro (escitalopram), Luvox (fluvoxamine)

SNRIs: Effexor (venlafaxine), Pristiq (desvenlafaxine), Cymbalta (duloxetine)

Tricyclics: Elavil (amitriptyline), Tofranil (imipramine), Norpramin (desipramine), Pamelor (nortriptyline), Anafranil (clopramine), Sinequan (doxepin),

MAOIs: Nardil (phenazine), Parnate (tranylcypromine), Marplan (isocarboxazid), Eldepryl/Emsam (selegiline)

Others: Wellbutrin (bupropion), Deseryl (trazodone), Remeron (mirtazapine), Strattera (atomoxetine)

Indications: These medications are used to treat depressive disorders, anxiety disorders, & obsessive-compulsive disorder. Some can also be used to help control chronic pain, & as a treatment for insomnia.

Precautions: It can take 2-6 weeks of medication treatment before any significant improvement in depressive symptoms is noted.

- Do not drive or operate heavy machinery until you know how the medication will affect you.
- Avoid alcohol & street drugs while taking these medications.
- Notify your doctor if you become or are planning to become pregnant, as some of these medications can increase the chances of miscarriage or birth defects.
- Prolonged use antidepressant medications can be associated with symptoms becoming more disabling, so some attempt to taper should be considered after a sufficient period of stability.
- Suddenly stopping these medications (especially SNRIs) can cause withdrawal symptoms.
- Some people (especially children & young adults) treated with antidepressants may experience manic moods and/or suicidal thoughts & impulses.
- SSRI & SNRIs may worsen osteoporosis in elderly patients.
- Tricyclics may cause abnormal heart rhythms.
- Other antidepressants should not be taken within 14 days of treatment with a MAOI.

- Patients on MAOIs should avoid foods containing tyramine (such as aged cheeses, cured meats, & yeast extracts) as well as certain medications (such as stimulants & anticongestants).

Possible Side Effects Include: drowsiness, dizziness, blurred vision, dry mouth, sweating, constipation, nausea, diarrhea, urinary hesitancy, restlessness, muscle spasms, agitation, tremor, weight gain, impaired sexual function, apathy, fast heartbeat, & high or low blood pressure. Other adverse effects not listed here can occur. Inform your doctor if you develop any unusual or disturbing symptoms.

Alternate Treatments: Certain other medications are used to augment the treatment of depression. These include: Thyroid hormone, Lithium, Amphetamines, Strattera, Deplin, Seroquel & Abilify. "Natural" substances can be helpful for milder symptoms. These include: Folic acid, Vits B1/6/12, Vit D, Carnitine, Tyrosine, & the herb St John's Wort. Various forms of psychotherapy are often helpful, & with time depression & anxiety may improve without medication. However, they frequently become more severe & chronic.