

## A Quick Reference

---

Common Psychotropic Medications

Common Adverse Side Effects

Recommended Uses

---

Antidepressants

Mood Stabilizers

Antipsychotics

Anti-Anxiety (Anxiolytics) and Sedatives

---

## Psychiatric Medications Table I: Antidepressants

| Antidepressant Class                                       | Names of Medications Within Class Available in Canada   | Most Common Side Effects   | Some Potential Drug Interactions   |
|--|---|--|--|
| Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors (SSRI)             | citalopram (Celexa), fluoxetine (Prozac), fluvoxamine (Luvox), paroxetine (Paxil), sertraline (Zoloft)  | nausea, insomnia, headaches, sexual dysfunction, jitteriness/motor restlessness, dry mouth, drowsiness   | St. John's Wort, MAOI; alcohol can increase side effects; caffeine can increase anxiety/insomnia   |
| Non-selective Cyclic Antidepressants/ Tricyclics (TCA)     | amitriptyline (Elavil), clomipramine (Anafranil), desipramine (Norpramin), doxepin (Sinequan), imipramine (Tofranil), nortriptyline (Aventyl), trimipramine (Surmontil) | dry mouth, sedation, constipation, blurred vision, dizziness, weight gain, urinary retention   | alcohol can increase side effects; caffeine can increase anxiety/insomnia  |
| Monoamine Oxidase Inhibitors (MAOI)                        | phenelzine (Nardil), tranylcypromine (Parnate)  | sedation, insomnia, blurred vision, constipation, tremor, orthostatic hypotension (blood pressure drops when rising from chair or bed), nausea               | all other antidepressants (including St. John's Wort), foods containing tyramine (must follow special restrictive diet), meperidine, OTC cough and cold products |
| Reversible Inhibitors of Monoamine Oxidase (RIMA)          | moclobemide (Manerix)   | insomnia, headache, dry mouth, blurred vision  | meperidine, dextromethorphan (DM cough syrup), St. John's Wort   |
| Serotonin Norepinephrine Reuptake Inhibitor (SNRI)         | venlafaxine (Effexor, Effexor XR)   | sedation, insomnia, headache, dry mouth, constipation, sweating, dizziness, nausea, sexual dysfunction, increased blood pressure                             | MAOI; alcohol can increase side effects; caffeine can increase anxiety/insomnia; use with caution in patients with high blood pressure                           |
| Norepinephrine Dopamine Reuptake Inhibitor (NDRI)          | bupropion (Wellbutrin, Zyban)   | jitteriness, insomnia, headaches, dry mouth, nausea  | MAOI, stimulants; increased seizure risk in patients with epilepsy   |
| Serotonin-2 antagonists/ Reuptake Inhibitors (SARI)        | trazodone (Desyrel)   | sedation, headache, nausea, dry mouth, blurred vision, constipation, orthostatic hypotension (blood pressure drops when rising from chair or bed), dizziness | use caution in combination with some benzodiazepines; alcohol can increase side effects; caffeine can increase anxiety/insomnia                                  |
| Noradrenergic/Specific Serotonergic Antidepressant (NaSSA) | mirtazapine (Remeron)   | sedation, fatigue, dry mouth, constipation, increased appetite, weight gain  | MAOI; dosage adjustment required with carbamazepine, alcohol can increase side effects   |

\* Tables revised January 2005 by Wendie Wood, R.Ph., B.A., B.S.P., B.C.P.P.



## Psychiatric Medications Table II: Mood Stabilizers

| Medication Name                             | Most Common Side Effects  | Some Potential Drug Interactions  |
|---|---|---|
| carbamazepine (Tegretal)                    | drowsiness, headache, tremor, blurred vision, nausea, weight gain, rash, photosensitivity, blood dyscrasias                         | can interact with several medications, therefore patient should always check with physician or pharmacist; alcohol can increase side effects  |
| gabapentin (Neurontin)                      | drowsiness, dizziness, blurred vision, tiredness, weight gain   | alcohol can increase side effects   |
| lamotrigine (Lamictal)                      | dizziness, drowsiness, headache, nausea, vomiting, rash (can be serious - contact physician immediately)                            | must be used with caution with valproate (increased risk of serious rash); alcohol can increase side effects  |
| lithium (Carbolith, Duralith, Lithane)      | tremor, dizziness, confusion, nausea, rash, vomiting, sedation, weight gain; long term use can cause thyroid and kidney dysfunction | use caution in combination with diuretics ('water pills') and other medications to treat high blood pressure; ibuprofen can cause increased lithium level; alcohol and caffeine can increase side effects |
| oxcarbazepine (Trileptal)                   | headache, drowsiness, dizziness, ataxia, tiredness, and nausea  | can interact with less medications than carbamazepine, but oral contraceptives may have decreased efficacy; alcohol can increase side effects   |
| topiramate (Topamax)                        | nausea, tremor, drowsiness, dizziness, weight loss  | oral contraceptives may have decreased efficacy; alcohol can increase side effects  |
| valproic acid/divalproex (Depakene, Epival) | nausea, sedation, weight gain, hair loss, menstrual disturbances, elevated liver enzymes  | interacts with several medications, therefore patient should always check with physician or pharmacist; alcohol can increase side effects   |

Treatment of bipolar disorder depends on the symptoms of the individual. Many 'mood stabilizers' have not 'officially' been approved for use in bipolar disorder, but are used frequently this way in clinical practice. Bipolar illness may also be treated with an anti-depressant along with a mood stabilizer. The second-generation anti-psychotics (see table IV) are also showing promise in acute mania and other phases of bipolar disorder, and may also be used with a mood stabilizer or alone.

\* Tables revised January 2005 by Wende Wood, R.Ph., B.A., B.S.P., B.C.P.P.



## Psychiatric Medications Table III: Anxiolytics (Anti-anxiety), Hypnotics and Sedatives

| Types of Medications                                    | Names of Medications Within Class Available in Canada  | Most Common Side Effects  | Some Potential Drug Interactions  |
|---|--|---|---|
| Benzodiazepines (formerly known as Minor Tranquilizers) | alprazolam (Xanax), bromazepam (Lectopam), chlordiazepoxide (Librium), clonazepam (Rivotril), diazepam (Valium), flurazepam (Dalmane), lorazepam (Ativan), nitrazepam (Mogadon), oxazepam (Serax), temazepam (Restoril), triazolam (Halcion) | tolerance, dependence, withdrawal upon discontinuation, dizziness, sedation, confusion, memory impairment, impaired coordination  | alcohol can increase side effects, especially drowsiness; use with caution in combination with other CNS (Central Nervous System) drugs - can cause increased sedation and other side effects |
| Miscellaneous   | buspirone (Buspar); zopiclone (Imovane); zaleplon (Starnoc)  | dizziness, sedation, confusion, bad taste in mouth (zopiclone); somewhat less likely to cause tolerance/dependence/withdrawal upon discontinuation than benzodiazepines, but can still happen | alcohol can increase side effects, especially drowsiness; use with caution in combination with other CNS (Central Nervous System) drugs - can cause increased sedation and other side effects |

Pharmacologic treatment of anxiety and panic disorders can also include antidepressants, especially SSRIs. In fact, antidepressants are considered first line pharmacological agents to treat anxiety disorders (first line treatment is often non-pharmacological, such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, etc). A benzodiazepine may be used for the first few weeks while the antidepressant takes effect, and is then tapered and discontinued. Treatment of insomnia includes treating underlying disorders, such as depression or chronic pain, and education about proper sleep hygiene.

\* Tables revised January 2005 by Wende Wood, R.Ph., B.A., B.S.P., B.C.P.P.



Psychiatric Medications Table IV: Antipsychotics

| Subtypes   | Names of Medications Within Class Available in Canada  | Most Common Side Effects  | Some Potential Drug Interactions  |
|--|--|---|---|
| First Generation (Typical, Conventional) Antipsychotics (formerly known as Major Tranquillizers) | chlorpromazine (Largactil), flupenthixol (Fluanxol), fluphenazine (Modecate), fluspirilene (IMAP), haloperidol (Haldol), loxapine (Loxapac), mesoridazine (Serentil), pericyazine (Neuleptil), perphenazine (Trilafon), pimozide (Orap), pipotiazine (Piportil), prochlorperazine (Stemetil), thioridazine (Mellari), thiothixene (Navane), trifluoperazine (Stelazine), zuclopenthixol (Clopixol) | sedation, Parkinson-like symptoms (tremor, muscle stiffness, uncoordinated spastic muscle movements, staggering gait, motor restlessness, pacing, loss of facial expression), hypotension, constipation, dizziness, weight gain, decreased sex drive, irregular heart beat, menstrual irregularities, tardive dyskinesia  | alcohol can increase side effects; caffeine can increase anxiety and agitation; use with caution in combination with other CNS (Central Nervous System) drugs, which can increase side effects; always check with physician or pharmacist before taking other medications |
| Second Generation (Atypical, Novel) Antipsychotics   | clozapine (Clozaril), olanzapine (Zyprexa, Zyprexa Zydis), quetiapine (Seroquel), risperidone (Risperdal, Risperdal M-TAB)   | sedation, weight gain, impaired glucose tolerance/diabetes, sexual dysfunction are most common side effects, though risk varies from agent to agent; can also have same side effects as typical agents, but usually more likely at higher doses; clozapine can cause agranulocytosis (life-threatening low white blood cell count) in 1% of patients, therefore all clozapine patients must get weekly or biweekly blood monitoring | alcohol can increase side effects; caffeine can increase anxiety and agitation; use with caution in combination with other CNS (Central Nervous System) drugs, which can increase side effects; always check with physician or pharmacist before taking other medications |

\* Tables revised January 2005 by Wende Wood, R.Ph., B.A., B.S.P., B.C.P.P.



## Psychotropic medications and their side effects

### What medications are used to treat schizophrenia?

Antipsychotic medications are used to treat schizophrenia and schizophrenia-related disorders. Some of these medications have been available since the mid-1950's. They are also called conventional "typical" antipsychotics. Some of the more commonly used medications include:

- Chlorpromazine (Thorazine)
- Haloperidol (Haldol)
- Perphenazine (generic only)
- Risperidone (generic only).

In the 1990's, new antipsychotic medications were developed. These new medications are called second generation, or "atypical" antipsychotics. One of these medications was clozapine (Clozaril). It is a very effective medication that treats psychotic symptoms, hallucinations, and breaks with reality, such as when a person believes he or she is the president. But clozapine can sometimes cause a serious problem called agranulocytosis, which is a loss of the white blood cells that help a person fight infection. Therefore, people who take clozapine must get their white blood cell counts checked every week or two. This problem and the cost of blood tests make treatment with clozapine difficult for many people. Still, clozapine is potentially helpful for people who do not respond to other antipsychotic medications.

### What are the side effects?

Some people have side effects when they start taking these medications. Most side effects go away after a few days and often can be managed successfully. People who are taking antipsychotics should not drive until they adjust to their new medication. Side effects of many antipsychotics include:

- Drowsiness
- Dizziness when changing positions
- Blurred vision
- Rapid heartbeat
- Sensitivity to the sun
- Skin rashes
- Menstrual problems for women.

### What medications are used to treat bipolar disorder?

Bipolar disorder, also called manic-depressive illness, is commonly treated with mood stabilizers. Sometimes, antipsychotics and antidepressants are used along with a mood stabilizer.

#### Mood stabilizers

People with bipolar disorder usually try mood stabilizers first. In general, people continue treatment with mood stabilizers for years. Lithium is a very effective mood stabilizer. It was the first mood stabilizer approved by the FDA in the 1970's for treating both manic and depressive episodes.

Anticonvulsant medications also are used as mood stabilizers. They were originally developed to treat seizures, but they were found to help control moods as well. One anticonvulsant commonly used as a mood stabilizer is valproic acid, also called divalproex sodium (Depakote).<sup>1</sup> For some people, it may work better than lithium.<sup>2</sup> Other anticonvulsants used as mood stabilizers are carbamazepine (Tegretol), lamotrigine (Lamictal) and oxcarbazepine (Trileptal).

**Atypical antipsychotics-** Atypical antipsychotic medications are sometimes used to treat symptoms of bipolar disorder. Often, antipsychotics are used along with other medications.

Antipsychotics used to treat people with bipolar disorder include:

- Olanzapine (Zyprexa), which helps people with severe or psychotic depression, which often is accompanied by a break with reality, hallucinations, or delusions<sup>2</sup>
- Aripiprazole (Abilify), which can be taken as a pill or as a shot
- Risperidone (Risperdal)
- Ziprasidone (Geodon)
- Clozapine (Clozaril), which is often used for people who do not respond to lithium or anticonvulsants.<sup>2</sup>

#### Antidepressants

Antidepressants are sometimes used to treat symptoms of depression in bipolar disorder. Fluoxetine (Prozac), paroxetine (Paxil), or sertraline (Zoloft) are a few that are used. However, people with bipolar disorder should not take an antidepressant on its own. Doing so can cause the person to rapidly switch from depression to mania, which can be dangerous.<sup>2</sup> To prevent this problem, doctors give patients a mood stabilizer or an antipsychotic along with an antidepressant.

### What are the side effects?

Treatments for bipolar disorder have improved over the last 10 years. But everyone responds differently to medications. If you have any side effects, tell your doctor right away. He or she may change the dose or prescribe a different medication.

Different medications for treating bipolar disorder may cause different side effects. Some medications used for treating bipolar disorder



have been linked to unique and serious symptoms, which are described below.

Lithium can cause several side effects, and some of them may become serious. They include:

- Loss of coordination
- Excessive thirst
- Frequent urination
- Blackouts
- Seizures
- Slurred speech
- Fast, slow, irregular, or pounding heartbeat
- Hallucinations (seeing things or hearing voices that do not exist)
- Changes in vision
- Itching, rash
- Swelling of the eyes, face, lips, tongue, throat, hands, feet, ankles, or lower legs.

If a person with bipolar disorder is being treated with lithium, he or she should visit the doctor regularly to check the levels of lithium in the blood, and make sure the kidneys and the thyroid are working normally.

Some possible side effects linked with valproic acid/divalproex sodium include:

- Changes in weight
- Nausea
- Stomach pain
- Vomiting
- Anorexia
- Loss of appetite.

### **Beta-blockers**

Beta-blockers control some of the physical symptoms of anxiety, such as trembling and sweating. Propranolol (Inderal) is a beta-blocker usually used to treat heart conditions and high blood pressure. The medicine also helps people who have physical problems related to anxiety. For example, when a person with social phobia must face a stressful situation, such as giving a speech, or attending an important meeting, a doctor may prescribe a beta-blocker. Taking the medicine for a short period of time can help the person keep physical symptoms under control.

### **What are the side effects?**

The most common side effects for benzodiazepines are drowsiness and dizziness. Other possible side effects include:

- Upset stomach
- Blurred vision
- Headache
- Confusion
- Grogginess
- Nightmares.

In addition, beta-blockers generally are not recommended for people with asthma or diabetes because they may worsen symptoms.

### **What medications are used to treat ADHD?**

Attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) occurs in both children and adults. ADHD is commonly treated with stimulants, such as:

- Methylphenidate (Ritalin, Metadate, Concerta, Daytrana)
- Amphetamine (Adderall)
- Dextroamphetamine (Dexadrine, Dextrostat).

### **What are the side effects?**

Most side effects are minor and disappear when dosage levels are lowered. The most common side effects include:

- Decreased appetite. Children seem to be less hungry during the middle of the day, but they are often hungry by dinnertime as the medication wears off.
- Sleep problems. If a child cannot fall asleep, the doctor may prescribe a lower dose. The doctor might also suggest that parents give the medication to their child earlier in the day, or stop the afternoon or evening dose. To help ease sleeping problems, a doctor may add a prescription for a low dose of an antidepressant or a medication called clonidine.
- Stomachaches and headaches.
- **Less common side effects.** A few children develop sudden, repetitive movements or sounds called tics. These tics may or may not be noticeable. Changing the medication dosage may make tics go away. Some children also may appear to have a personality change, such as appearing "flat" or without emotion. Talk with your child's doctor if you see any of these side effects.

## COMMONLY PRESCRIBED PSYCHOTROPIC MEDICATIONS

### Antipsychotics

*(used in the treatment of schizophrenia and mania)*

#### Typical Antipsychotics:

Haldol (haloperidol)  
 Loxitane (loxapine)  
 Mellaril (thioridazine)  
 Moban (molindone)  
 Navane (thiothixene)  
 Prolixin (fluphenazine)  
 Serentil (mesoridazine)  
 Stelazine (trifluoperazine)  
 Thorazine (chlorpromazine)  
 Trifalon (perphenazine)

#### Atypical Antipsychotics:

Abilify (aripiprazole)  
 Clozaril (clozapine)  
 Risperdal (risperidone)  
 Seroquel (quetiapine)  
 Zyprexa (olanzapine)

### Mood Stabilizers

*(used in the treatment of bipolar disorder)*

Depakene (valproic acid)  
 Depakote  
 Eskalith  
 Lithobid (lithium)  
 Lithonate  
 Lithotabs  
 \*Lamictal (lamotrigine)  
 \*Neurontin (gabapentin)  
 \*Tegretol (carbamazepine)  
 \*Topamax (topiramate)

### Antidepressants

#### Tricyclics:

\*Anafranil (clomipramine)  
 Asendin (amoxapine)  
 Elavil (amitriptyline)  
 Norpramin (desipramine)  
 Pamelor (nortriptyline)  
 Sinequan (doxepin)  
 Surmontil (trimipramine)  
 Tofranil (imipramine)  
 Vivactil (protriptyline)

#### SSRIs:

Celexa (citalopram)  
 Lexapro (escitalopram)  
 \*Luvox (fluvoxamine)  
 Paxil (paroxetine)  
 Prozac (fluoxetine)  
 Zoloft (sertraline)

#### MAOIs:

Nardil (phenelzine)  
 Parnate (tranylcypromine)

#### Others:

Desyrel (trazadone)  
 Effexor (venlafaxine)  
 Remeron (mirtazapine)  
 Serzone (nefazodone)  
 Wellbutrin (bupropion)

### Anti-panic Agents

Klonopin (clonazepam)  
 Paxil (paroxetine)  
 Xanax (alprazolam)  
 Zoloft (sertraline)  
 \*Antidepressants are also used in treatment of panic disorder.

### Anti-obsessive Agents

Anafranil (clomipramine)  
 Luvox (fluvoxamine)  
 Paxil (paroxetine)  
 Prozac (fluoxetine)  
 Zoloft (sertraline)

### Antianxiety Agents

Alivan (lorazepam)  
 BuSper (buspirone)  
 Centrax (prazepam)  
 \*Inderal (propranolol)  
 \*Klonopin (clonazepam)  
 Lexapro (escitalopram)  
 Librium (chlordiazepoxide)  
 Serax (oxazepam)  
 \*Tenomin (atenolol)  
 Tranxene (clorazepate)  
 Valium (diazepam)  
 Xanax (alprazolam)  
 \*Antidepressants, especially SSRIs, are also used in the treatment of anxiety.

### Stimulants

*(used in the treatment of ADHD)*

Adderall (amphetamine and dextroamphetamine)  
 Cylert (pemoline)  
 Dexedrine (dextroamphetamine)  
 Ritalin (methylphenidate)  
 \*Antidepressants with stimulant properties, such as Norpramin and Wellbutrin, are also used in the treatment of ADHD

Listed above are the brand names, followed by the generic in parenthesis. A second chart on the back of this sheet provides cross-referencing by generic name.

\*Although this medication has been approved by the FDA for the treatment of other disorders, it has not been approved for this particular use. Some evidence of this medication's efficacy for such use does exist however. This type of medication use is referred to as "off label."

Remember, always consult your doctor or pharmacist with any specific medication questions