

Medications for Depression and Anxiety

Group Main Use	Medication Brand/Generic	Form	Dose Schedule	Dose Range	Most Common Side Effects for Group	Pros for Group	Cautions for Group
Mood Stabilizers (Bipolar, booster)	Eskalith CR 450 Lithobid Lithonate Lithotab Lithium Carbonate Li ₂ CO ₃	Capsules Tablets 300 mg 450 mg	2 to 4 times a day	Blood level 0.6-1.2	Lithium: nausea, GI irritation, diarrhea, vomiting, lower thyroid function, may increase white blood cells, tremor, skin rashes. If does too high side effects increase, may increase appetite	Mood stabilizers are first choice for Bipolar Disorder (manic-depression). They are also used to boost the effects of antidepressants or help impulse control, violence	Lithium has more nuisance side effects but now serious usually except overdose.. Depakote may rarely seriously harm the liver and Tegretol may seriously lower blood counts.
	Depakote Valporic Acid	Tablets 125 mg 250 mg 500 mg	2 to 3 times a day	Blood level 50-125	Depakote: sedation (usually mild), may increase appetite, occasionally associated with mild to moderate hair loss. GI irritation. May increase energy.	Lithium is the best studied and may also treat unipolar depression. Slow release versions more convenient	. Thus depending on which med labs are usually important to check such as blood level of medicine, thyroid, liver, blood count.
	Tegretol Carbamazepine	Tablets 100mg (chewable) 200 mg XR (extended release) 100 mg 200 mg 400 mg suspension 100mg/5ml	2 to 3 times a day XR 1 or 2 times a day	Blood level 4-12	Tegretol: like TCA (see TCA), unsteady gait if level high, usually mild insignificant drop in blood counts	Tegretol, Topamax, Neurontin, Lamictal and Depakote are also used for seizures.	Depakote and Lithium may increase weight somewhat. Interactions may be significant and varied with Tegretol.

All these medications should be taken 7 days a week to be effective. Simultaneous use of alcohol or cigarettes and especially street drugs should be avoided. All antidepressants may increase mania risk in persons with Bipolar (manic-depressive) disorder. All medications should be avoided if possible in pregnancy. This chart is intended to be a summary guide, not a full and complete list.

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Group Main Use	Medication Brand/Generic	Form	Dose Schedule	Dose Range	Most Common Side Effects for Group	Pros for Group (cont.)	Cautions for Group (cont.)
Mood Stabilizers (cont.)	Neurontin Gabapentin	Capsules 100 mg 300 mg 400 mg	2 to 3 times a day	800 to 2400mg No blood level Target 900 to 1800 mg in adults often	Sedation (usually mild to moderate), dizzy, unsteady gait, fatigue.	Depakote may best help rapid cycling and mixed mania /depression. It may also help prevent migraines.	All should be avoided if pregnant, if possible.
	Lamictal Lamotrigine	Tablets 25mg 100mg 150mg 200mg	1 to 2 times a day	No blood level	Nausea, dizzy, unsteady gait, double or blurry vision, headache, sedation	Neurontin, Topamax, and Lamictal are new and seem low in side effects, especially Neurontin which may also help sleep and pain. No lab tests needed. Topamax may cause weight loss.	Mood stabilizers little help for most anxiety unless as booster or part of Bipolar. Lamictal may cause a severe, dangerous rash, especially in youth. Avoid with Depakote and increase dose slowly.
	Topamax Topiramate	Tablets 25mg 100mg 150mg 200mg Capsules (sprinkles) 15mg 25mg	2 times a day	Often 200-1000mg No blood level	Sedation, dizzy, unsteady gait, slower or fuzzy thinking, nervousness		

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