PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS FOR MENTAL ILLNESS

This pamphlet should be used only as a general guideline to inform you about the medication(s) which you are taking including:

- What these medications are used for
- How the medication works
- Possible side effects
- Precautions you should be aware of

You may experience all, some, or none of the side effects listed because individuals react differently to each medication. If you have additional questions after reading the material, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

WHY USE YOUR MEDICATIONS?
Prescription medications can help you with the following:

- reduce symptoms
- prevent relapse
- improve your quality of life

You must monitor your response to the medication carefully in order to maximize the benefits of medications and detect side effects.

DO NOT use alcohol and illicit drugs while taking the medications.

HOW DO YOU TAKE YOUR MEDICATION?

- To get the most benefit, use the medication as prescribed.
  o If 1 time a day, take in the morning or evening.
  o If 2 times a day, take in the morning and late afternoon/early evening.
  o Or as directed by your doctor.
- Take your medication at the same time(s) each day.
- DO NOT change your dose or take it more often than prescribed.
- The medication may be taken with or without food, if you do not know, ask your doctor or pharmacist.
- DO NOT stop taking the medication(s) or reduce the dose without first discussing it with your doctor. Stopping the medication(s) may worsen the illness.

WHAT IF YOU MISSED A DOSE?
If you missed a dose, take it as soon as you remember. If it is near the time of your next dose, skip the missed dose and resume your usual dosing schedule. DO NOT double the dose.

TELL YOUR DOCTOR IF YOU:

1. Have had allergic reactions to drugs or food.
2. Are taking any other medications (including herbals and illicit drugs).
3. Are pregnant or breast-feeding.
4. Have diabetes, kidney, liver, or heart disease.
5. Are on a special diet or taking food supplements.
6. Drink alcohol or smoke.
7. Stop taking the prescribed medications.
8. Experience side effects.

REMEMBER

1. Know your medications.
2. Follow directions and read the label carefully.
3. Store medications in a cool dry place.
4. Keep medications out of the reach of children.
5. Ask about special precautions.
6. Find out about possible side effects.
7. Keep your doctor informed.

This brochure provides information about medications in the following categories:

- Antidepressants
- Antipsychotic
- Anti-Anxiety & Sleeping Agents
- Mood Stabilizers
- Medications Used to Treat Extrapyramidal Side Effects
- Stimulants

**These medications are to be used only when prescribed by your doctor.**

Ask your doctor or pharmacist which category or categories of medications you are taking.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS, ASK YOUR

- Doctor
- Therapist
- Pharmacy

Mental Health Pharmacy Department
Revised 11/06
**ANTIDEPRESSANTS**

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<tr>
<td>Venlafaxine</td>
<td>Effexor</td>
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*used mainly in obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD)

**WHAT ARE THEY USED FOR?**

They may be used to treat symptoms of depression, including:
- depressed mood
- lack of pleasure

These drugs work with the natural substances in your body to help make you feel well and happy.

**SIDE EFFECTS:**

**Common:** drowsiness, lightheadedness, dry mouth, nervousness, constipation, weight gain, rapid heart rate, change in sexual function

**TRICYCLICS:** Dizziness, blurred vision. These effects often decrease in 1 to 2 weeks.

**SSRI’s:** Nausea, diarrhea, insomnia (sertraline, fluoxetine), somnolence (paroxetine, fluvoxamine), weight loss, and suicidal thoughts.

**MAOIs:** Orthostatic hypotension, edema, insomnia, agitation, blurred vision

**PRECAUTIONS:**

- Antidepressants may take a month or more to take effect.
- Avoid barbiturates, alcohol, and illicit drugs.
- Do not operate a car or machinery if feeling sleepy.
- If you are pregnant or breast-feeding, consult your doctor.

**IF YOU ARE TAKING A MAO INHIBITOR:**

- Do not drink or eat excessive amounts of caffeinated products (e.g. coffee, tea, chocolate.)
- Do not drink alcohol, especially Chianti (red wine).
- Do not eat cheese, sour cream, yogurt, or smoked meats.
- Do not eat fava beans, avocados, or bananas.
- These foods interact with the medication and increase your blood pressure.

**ANTIPSYCHOTIC AGENTS**

<table>
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<td>Trifluoperazine</td>
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<td><strong>ATYPICALS</strong></td>
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<td>Aripiprazole</td>
<td>Abilify</td>
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<td>Clozapine</td>
<td>Clozaril</td>
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<td>Olanzapine</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quetiapine</td>
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<tr>
<td>Risperidone</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ziprasidone</td>
<td>Geodon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Olanzapine and Fluoxetine</td>
<td>Symbax</td>
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**WHAT ARE THEY USED FOR?**

Antipsychotic agents can be used to treat schizophrenia or bipolar disorder. Schizophrenia causes disorganized thought, confusion, altered view of reality, and hallucinations. Bipolar disorder causes a person to alternate between depression and mania, see section “Mood Stabilizer”. Antipsychotic agents may be able to reduce or stop these events by working with the natural substances in your body to help you with the following: (1) organize your thoughts, (2) help you stay concentrated, (3) help reduce excitability, confusion, and withdrawal, (4) improve your ability to control hallucinations.

**SIDE EFFECTS**

**TYPICAL:** Sleepiness, dry mouth, dizziness, blurred vision, rapid heart beat, stuffy nose, restlessness, muscle stiffness, trembling and shaking may occur. These effects often disappear in 1 to 2 weeks.

**SERIOUS SIDE EFFECT:** Tardive dyskinesia (TD), which is an involuntary movement of the face or mouth, may occur and can be irreversible.

**ATYPICAL:** These medications cause many of the same side effects as the typical antipsychotic, but rarely cause muscle stiffness, trembling, and restlessness.

**SERIOUS SIDE EFFECTS:**

- increase blood pressure
- increase cholesterol

Clozapine requires frequent blood test.

**PRECAUTIONS:**

- Avoid barbiturates, alcohol, and illicit drugs if taking these medications. They may increase the side effects of antipsychotic.
- Avoid operating a car or machinery.
- Antipsychotic may take a month or longer to take effect.
- If you are pregnant, think you may be pregnant, or are breast-feeding, consult your doctor or pharmacist.
- Contact your doctor if you experience flu-like symptoms (fever, sore throat, and lethargy [lack of energy]).
- Avoid extended sun exposure. Stay in the shade, drink water, use sun-block and KEEP COOL.
MEDICATIONS USED TO TREAT EXTRAPYRAMIDAL SIDE EFFECTS (EPSE)

**WHAT ARE EXTRAPYRAMIDAL SIDE EFFECTS?**
EPSE are side effects that usually occur from taking typical antipsychotic medications. Examples of EPSE include:

- **Akathesia**: an uncontrollable feeling of restlessness or inability to stay still
- **Pseudoparkinsonism**: a feeling of slowing down and stiffness, trembling, and shaking
- **Dystonia**: a feeling of muscle tension or spasm

The medications can minimize or eliminate the side effects from taking a typical antipsychotic medication. For a complete list of antipsychotic medications, see the section “Antipsychotic Agents.”

**SIDE EFFECTS:**
Benztropine, trihexyphenidyl, diphenhydramine, and biperiden can cause the following:
- dry mouth
- dry skin
- constipation

Of the medications listed, benztropine is the most sedating. Amantadine can cause the following:
- irritability
- dizziness

**PRECAUTIONS:**
- Avoid alcohol and illicit drugs with these medications as it may increase sedation.
- Do not operate a car or machinery until you are sure that the medication does not adversely affect you.
- If you are pregnant, think that you may be pregnant, or are breast-feeding, consult your doctor or pharmacist about the risk associated with these medications.
- High doses of these medications can lead to serious outcome.
- Contact your physician immediately if you experience any of the following while taking these medication:
  - flushed face
  - rapid heart beat
  - fever

**STIMULANT MEDICATIONS**

**WHAT ARE THEY USED FOR?**
Stimulant medications are mainly used to treat attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in children who are unable to concentrate. Stimulant medications can do the following:

- improve attention span
- improve ability to follow directions
- decrease hyperactivity
- improve ability to think before acting
- decrease appetite

**SIDE EFFECTS:**
Common:
- trouble falling asleep
- headaches
- stomach aches
- nausea
- nervousness

These often go away after two weeks or if the dose is lowered by your doctor.

**SERIOUS:**
- muscle twitches/tics
- sadness which lasts more than a few days
- unusual behavior, e.g. suicidal thoughts

Tell your doctor or pharmacist right away if you experience any of these side effects.

**PRECAUTIONS:**
- If you have schizophrenia or bipolar disorder, these medications can worsen your symptoms.
- Physical addiction may occur in adolescents or adults.
- Keep this medication where it will not be abused by others.
- A child may not grow as fast as usual while taking this medication. Growth usually catches up after stopping medication. Monitor height and weight regularly.
ANTI-ANXIETY & SLEEPING AGENTS

<table>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>BENZODIAZEPINES</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Alprazolam*</td>
<td>Xanax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chlorazepate</td>
<td>Tranzene</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chlordiazepoxide</td>
<td>Librium</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clonazepam</td>
<td>Klonopin</td>
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<td>Diazepam</td>
<td>Valium</td>
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<td>Flurazepam*</td>
<td>Dalmane</td>
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<td>Lorazepam</td>
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<td>Oxazepam</td>
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<td>Temazepam*</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>NON-BENZODIAZEPINES</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Amitriptyline**</td>
<td>Elavil*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Buspirone</td>
<td>Buspar</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diphenhydramine</td>
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<td>Eszopiclone**</td>
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<td>Hydroxyzine</td>
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<tr>
<td>Imipramine** (low doses)</td>
<td>Topramil**</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zaleplon**</td>
<td>Sonata</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zolpidem**</td>
<td>Ambien</td>
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</table>

*Primarily used for panic disorders
**Primarily used for sleep disorders

WHAT ARE THEY USED FOR?
These medications may be used to treat anxiety which can include any or all of the symptoms following:
- an unreasonable and unpleasant state of tension
- uneasiness or fear (not normal tension)
- difficulty sleeping
- muscle spasms

Anti-anxiety medications work with the natural substances in your body to help you feel relaxed and calm. They can cause mild sedation while giving relief from tension and anxiety.

SIDE EFFECTS:
- drowsiness
- lightheadedness
- clumsiness
- depression
- slurred speech, confusion, headaches, nausea, and physical addiction

**Rare: breathing difficulty, nervousness, or excitement may occur.
 NON-BENZODIAZEPINES: headache, dizziness, nausea, diarrhea
 Zolpidem (Ambien) may cause tremor.

PRECAUTIONS:
- Avoid taking barbiturates, alcohol, and illicit drugs while taking anti-anxiety medications. The combination can be deadly.
- Do not operate a car or machinery while taking these medications.
- If you are pregnant, think you may be pregnant, or are breastfeeding, consult your doctor or pharmacist about the possible risks of using these medications.
- Do not stop taking these medications or reduce the dose without first discussing it with your doctor.
- May cause physical and/or psychological addiction.

MOOD STABILIZERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generic Name</th>
<th>Brand Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carbamazepine</td>
<td>Tegretol</td>
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<tr>
<td>Divalproex sodium</td>
<td>Depakote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lamotrigene</td>
<td>Lamictal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lithium carbonate</td>
<td>Eskalith, Lithobid</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oxcarbazepine</td>
<td>Trileptal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Valproic acid</td>
<td>Depakene</td>
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</table>

WHAT ARE THEY USED FOR?
These medications may be used to treat bipolar mood disorder, also known as manic depression. This is a disorder where you alternate between mania and depression.

Mania: When you are overly self-confident, reckless, uncontrollable, sleepless, and excited.
Depression: When you feel low-spirited, hopeless, and extremely sad.

These medications work on the natural substances in your body to do the following:
- make you feel happy and confident
- help stabilize your moods by controlling your highs and lows.

It may take up to two weeks for these medications to work.

SIDE EFFECTS:
- sedation
- dry mouth
- stomach upset
- drowsiness
- diarrhea
- weight gain

Lithium may cause thirst, muscle weakness, and slightly impaired memory.
Carbamazepine may cause a rash. If this occurs it is very important that you contact your doctor.

PRECAUTIONS:
- Be aware of your salt intake with Lithium. Do not restrict salt from your diet. A low salt concentration in your body can cause fatigue, slurred speech and trembling. In severe cases, coma or death may result.
- Avoid extended sun exposure. Stay in the shade, drink water, use sun-block and KEEP COOL.
- Blood tests are necessary to ensure that the level in your blood are safe and effective while taking the following:
  - Lithium (Eskalith, Lithobid)
  - Valproic Acid (Depakene)
  - Divalproex sodium (Depakote)
  - Carbamazepine (Tegretol)
- If you are pregnant, think that you are pregnant, or are breastfeeding, consult your doctor or pharmacist about the possible risks associated with these medications.
- Do not stop taking these medications or reduce the dose without first discussing it with your doctor.