

Anxiolytic Drugs



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This document has been translated into other languages.
In case of any discrepancy or inconsistency, the English version shall prevail.

What are Anti-Anxiety medicines?

Anti-anxiety medicines, also known as anxiolytics, are used to treat symptoms of anxiety. Anxiety is a mental health condition characterized by feelings of worry, fear, and unease. Anti-anxiety medications help manage these symptoms and can be used alongside other treatments such as psychotherapy.

There are several types of anti-anxiety medications, each working in different ways to manage symptoms of anxiety:

- **Antidepressants:**
Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors (SSRIs) and Serotonin and Norepinephrine Reuptake Inhibitors (SNRIs) are the most common medications used as maintenance therapy to treat anxiety. They work by affecting neurotransmitters in the brain, which are chemical messengers that affect our moods.
- **Benzodiazepines:**
Also known as minor tranquilizers. These work quickly in the body to reduce symptoms of anxiety. They are generally safe when taken as prescribed.
- **Buspirone:**
Buspirone is used for the short-term or long-term treatment of anxiety symptoms. It works more slowly than benzodiazepines and may not treat all types of anxiety disorder, but it usually has fewer side effects and a lower risk of dependency.
- **Gabapentin and Pregabalin:**
These medicines can be used to treat epilepsy, nerve pain, as well as anxiety. It works by stopping your brain from releasing the chemicals that make you feel anxious.
- **Beta-Blockers:**
Beta-blockers are typically used for short-term relief of acute symptoms, such as palpitation and hand tremor. They work by blocking the effects of adrenaline, reducing physical symptoms of anxiety like a racing heart or shaking.

What are the common side effects?

Classification	Common side effects	Remarks
Antidepressants (SSRIs & SNRIs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Nausea and vomiting➤ Indigestion and stomach aches➤ Constipation or diarrhea➤ Insomnia or drowsiness➤ Low sex drive and sexual dysfunction	Increased risk of self-harm and suicidal thoughts in children and adolescence.
Benzodiazepines	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Drowsiness➤ Light-headedness➤ Confusion➤ Unsteadiness➤ Dizziness➤ Slurred speech➤ Muscle weakness➤ Constipation	Benzodiazepines are often misused, leading to dependence. They are generally safe when taken as prescribed.
Buspirone	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Dizziness➤ Headache➤ Drowsiness➤ Feeling nervous or excited➤ Sleep disturbances➤ Blurred vision	Avoid grapefruit or grapefruit juice while taking buspirone as this can lead to a buildup of buspirone in the body and increase side effects.

Classification	Common side effects	Remarks
Gabapentin and Pregabalin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Drowsiness ➤ Dizziness ➤ Headache ➤ Nausea ➤ Diarrhea ➤ Mood changes ➤ Blurred vision ➤ Dry mouth ➤ Sexual dysfunction ➤ Weight gain ➤ Swelling of hands and feet. 	/
Beta-Blockers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Headaches ➤ Dizziness ➤ Fatigue ➤ Slow heart rate ➤ Cold fingers or toes ➤ Nausea ➤ Vomiting ➤ Diarrhea ➤ Stomach pain ➤ Nightmare 	/

Can I stop taking my Anti-Anxiety medicines?

It's essential to understand that your anti-anxiety medicines are prescribed to help manage your symptoms and improve your quality of life. Abruptly stopping these medications can lead to withdrawal symptoms such as restlessness, irritability, anxiety, depression, sleep disturbances, and in severe cases, physical symptoms like tremors and seizures. Therefore, it's crucial to always follow your doctor's instructions regarding your medication. If you have concerns about your medication, don't hesitate to discuss this with your doctor.

How long do I need to take my Anti-Anxiety medicines?

The duration for which you need to take your anti-anxiety medicines can vary greatly depending on your individual circumstances. Factors such as the severity of your symptoms, your overall health, and how you respond to the medication can all influence the length of your treatment. Some people may need medication for a few months, while others may need it for several years. It's important to have regular check-ups with your doctor to assess your progress and adjust your treatment plan as necessary.

What should the caregiver do if patient refuses to take their Anti-Anxiety medicines?

If a patient refuses to take their medicine, it's important for caregivers to approach the situation with patience and understanding. Open communication is key. Discuss the importance of the medication, the benefits it provides, and the potential risks of not taking it. If the patient continues to refuse, it may be helpful to involve the doctor or a mental health professional in the conversation. They can provide further information and reassurance, or suggest alternative treatments if necessary. Remember, it's crucial to respect the patient's autonomy and feelings while also ensuring their health and safety.

<u>DO</u>
1. Strictly follow the doctor's instructions.
2. Pay attention to the drug name, dosage and frequency, etc. before taking your medication.
3. Read the prescription label carefully.
4. Pay attention to the dosage, indication, contraindication and side effects.
5. Understand the method of administration.
6. Store your medication properly.
7. Complete the prescribed course unless otherwise directed.
8. If you have any questions, talk to your family and ask your health care professionals.
<u>DON'T</u>
1. Change the dosage of your medication on your own.
2. Stop taking your medication except on your doctor's advice.
3. Drink alcohol with your medication.
4. Put your medication in other bottle.
5. Take other medication unless directed by your doctor.
6. Lie to your doctors about your compliance.