

COMPARING MEDICATION OPTIONS

Trade and Generic Name	Common Side Effects	Benefits	Drawbacks
Stimulants			
Ritalin (methylphenidate)	Insomnia Poor appetite Decreased appetite Headache Mood changes	Short -acting Works for most patients Good safety record Flexible Helps patients maintain focus	Frequent dosing is inconvenient Side effects may make it hard to stick with treatment May blunt emotions; may worsen anxiety
Ritalin-SR (methylphenidate)	Same as short-acting Ritalin	Eliminates midday dose Good safety record	Same as above Less effective than short-acting Ritalin and other stimulants
Dexedrine (dextroamphetamine)	Insomnia Decreased appetite Nausea Headache Mood Changes	Fast-acting Provides more “natural” response (patient “feels like herself”)	Not tolerated by everybody; can produce angry or edgy reaction
Dexedrine spansules	Same as Dexedrine	Good long-acting forms: long duration of action eliminates midday dose	Same as Dexedrine
Adderall (mixed salts of amphetamines)	Same as Dexedrine	Provides more consistent control with long duration of action Often better tolerated than Dexedrine	Same as Dexedrine
Tricyclic Antidepressants			
Tofranil (imipramine)	Dry mouth Constipation Decreased appetite Nausea Dizziness Constipation Rapid heartbeat	Long-acting Effective for comorbid depression and anxiety	Takes up to several weeks to Must be taken consistently; medication is continually circulating the bloodstream Doesn't work immediately Not as effective as stimulants
Norpramin (desipramine)	Fewer side effects than Tofranil	Same as Tofranil	Same as Tofranil
New-Generation Tricyclic			
Wellbutrin SR (bupropion)	Insomnia Rash Nausea	Easy dosing Long acting More effective than other tricyclics for attentional problems	Not as effective “focus” as stimulants

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Combined Serotonin- and Norepinephrine-Reuptake Inhibitor

Effexor (venlafaxine)	Fewer than traditional tricyclics and stimulants	Fast response, long-acting Especially good for ADHD/depression	May not be as effective as stimulants Must be taken consistently
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Alpha-2-Adrenoreceptor Agonists

Catapres (clonidine)	Sleepiness (only with pill, not patch) Low blood pressure	Good control of behavior and impulses Helps control comorbid tic disorders. Promotes sleep	Short-acting Could cause rebound hypertension if discontinued suddenly
Tenex (guanfacine)	Low blood pressure	Same as Catapres; longer acting	Doesn't affect focus; only impulsivity No pills to take (for patch) Same as Catapres