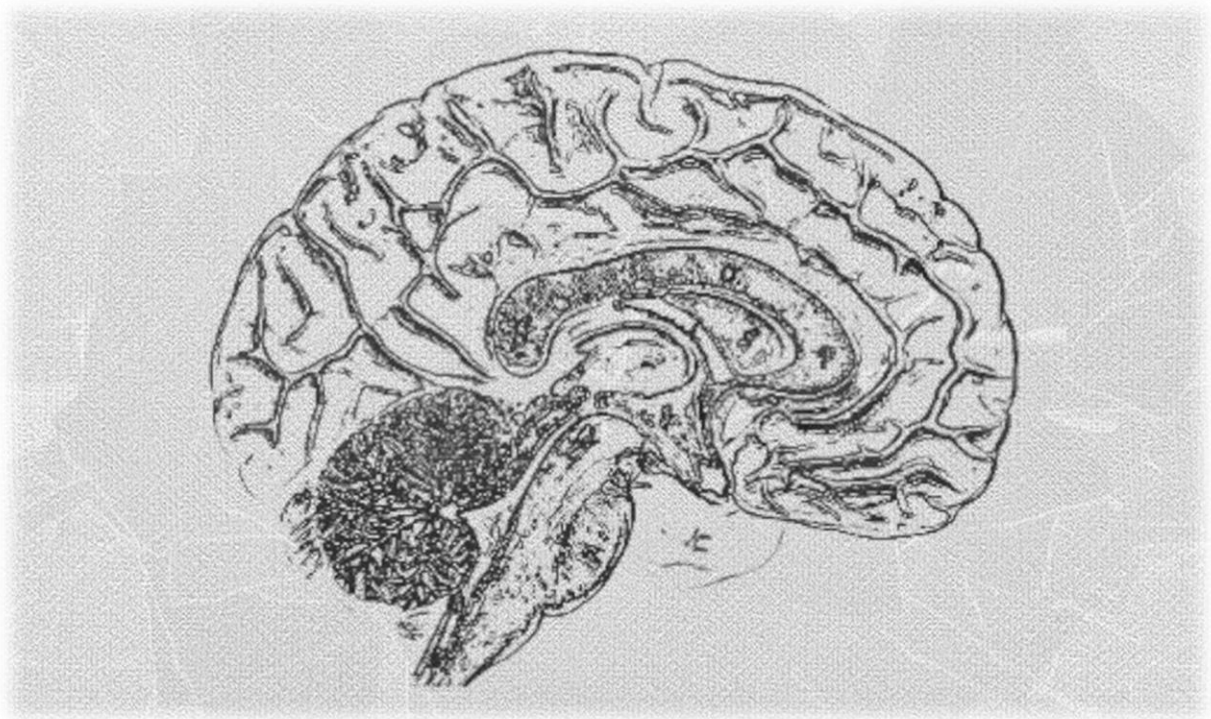


Treatment Options



A guide to effective psychiatric medications, natural treatments and therapies

We hope this list will help you brainstorm with us and find new ways to reach full recovery. We don't recommend using it on your own – most of these treatments will not be right for everyone and important details (like risks) are left out. Please ask us if you'd like to learn more about any of the options below, and feel free to take a copy with you.

Bipolar & Mood Swings

Most medications in this category are called *Mood Stabilizers* as they help to stabilize the cycling between depressed and manic (irritable, agitated, hyper) states of bipolar disorder. Some are only used for the depressed phase, and these may be helpful during non-bipolar depression as well. Many of these medications can help people with irritability or mood swings that are not due to bipolar disorder (such as borderline personality disorder).

Bipolar Depression

Lamotrigine (lamictal), quetiapine (seroquel), lithium, modafinil (provigil), armodafinil (nuvigil), pramipexole (mirapex), ropinorole (requip), olanzapine/fluoxetine combination (symbyax), lurasidone (latuda), cariprazine (vraylar), pioglitazone (actose), minocycline/aspirin combo, ramelteon (rozerem). Electroconvulsive therapy (ECT), transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS).

Manic and Mixed States

Oxcarbazepine (trileptal), carbamazepine (tegretol, equetro), valproate (depakote), lithium

Atypicals: Aripiprazole (abilify), asenapine (saphris), brexpiprazole (rexulti), cariprazine (vraylar), iloperidone (fanapt), lurasidone (latuda), olanzapine (zyprexa), olanzapine/fluoxetine combination (symbyax, zyprexa+prozac), paliperidone (invega), quetiapine (seroquel), risperidone (risperdal), ziprasidone (geodon).

Experimental treatments for bipolar: Nimodipine, isradipine, amlodipine, verapamil, allopurinol, levetiracetam (keppra), clozapine (clozaril), memantine (namenda), galantamine.

Natural

Omega-3 (fish oil), N-acetylcysteine (NAC, cerefolin), inositol, magnesium, sensoril, empower-plus vitamin, lightbox, dawn simulator, dark therapy (strict night-time darkness).

Psychotherapies

Interpersonal social rhythm therapy (IPSRT), bipolar psychoeducation group, family-assisted therapy. See also therapies for depression. Dialectical behavior therapy (DBT) was originally designed for borderline personality disorder but can be helpful for severe mood swings in bipolar.

Antidepressants

Antidepressants are helpful for non-bipolar depression and anxiety. Their use in bipolar depression is more controversial – they can rarely help (about 10% of the time) and have a greater chance of making moods worse (20-30% of the time).

SSRI Antidepressants

Fluoxetine (prozac), sertraline (zoloft), citalopram (celexa), escitalopram (lexapro), paroxetine (paxil), fluvoxamine (luvox).

Serotonergic Antidepressants

Vortioxetine (trintellix), vilazodone (viibryd).

SNRI Antidepressants

Venlafaxine (effexor), desvenlafaxine (pristiq), duloxetine (cymbalta), milnacipran (savella), levomilnacipran (fetzima).

Other Antidepressants

Bupropion (wellbutrin, budeprion, aplenzin), mirtazipine (remeron), vilazodone (viibryd), nefazodone (serzone), trazodone (desyrel), pramipexole (mirapex), ropinorole (requip), riluzole (rilutek), amantadine, buspirone (when used with melatonin), ketamine.

MAOI Antidepressants

Selegiline (emsam), tranylcypromine (parnate), isocarboxazid (marplan), phenelzine (nardil).

Tricyclic Antidepressants

Amitriptyline (elavil), clomipramine (anafranil), doxepin (sinequan), imipramine (tofranil), nortriptyline (pamelor), protriptyline (vivactil), trimipramine (sumontil), desipramine (norpramin).
Tetracyclic versions: maprotiline, amoxapine.

Antidepressant Augmentation

These options only help depression when added to an antidepressant

Lithium, aripiprazole (abilify), quetiapine (seroquel), ziprasidone (geodon), risperidone (risperdal), olanzapine (symbyax or zyprexa/prozac), cariprazine (vraylar), rexulti (brexpiprazole), modafinil (provigil), armodafinil (nuvigil), thyroid T3 (cytomel), thyroid T4 (synthroid), statins (lovastatin, atorvastatin), topiramate (topamax), pindolol, cycloserine, minocycline.

Natural

Lightbox, SAMe, l-methylfolate (deplin, cerefolin, enlyte), omega-3, citicoline, chromium picolinate, B-vitamins, folate, rhodiola rosea, creatine, curcumin, chamomile, acetyl-l-carnitine, saffron, lavender.

Devices and Procedures

Transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS), electroconvulsive therapy (ECT), wake therapy, lightbox, dawn simulator, air ionizer (www.cet.org), ketamine infusion (experimental), vagal nerve stimulation (surgical device), alpha-stim (www.alpha-stim.com), whole body hyperthermia.

Psychotherapies

Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), mindfulness, acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT), interpersonal therapy, behavioral activation. A specific therapy is available for chronic depression called cognitive behavioral analysis system of therapy (CBASP).

Anxiety, Trauma, Phobias

Anxiety is usually a feature of another psychiatric problem, and is best addressed by treating the underlying problem. When anxiety medications are used to treat they symptom of anxiety, rather than a diagnosable anxiety disorder, things can go wrong (this is why most medications for anxiety actually list “anxiety” as a side effect).

Anxiety disorders include: Panic Disorder, Generalized Anxiety Disorder, Phobias, and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Most of the antidepressants above are also effective in these anxiety disorders. A few other options exist for anxiety disorders:

General anxiety treatments

Most of the antidepressants above are also effective in these anxiety disorders, though antidepressants can worsen anxiety/mood if you have bipolar disorder. *Non antidepressant options:* buspirone (buspar), gabapentin (neurontin), pregabalin (lyrica), riluzole (rilutek). *For performance anxiety:* propranolol (inderal). *Device:* alpha-stim (www.alpha-stim.com).

Post traumatic stress (PTSD)

Treatment of PTSD: Most serotonin (SSRI, SNRI) antidepressants, mirtazipine (remeron), topiramate (topamax). See also *Nightmares* under *Sleep* (below).

Prevention of PTSD: If you’ve had a recent trauma, avoiding alcohol and benzodiazepines can help prevent PTSD. Two medications (hydrocortisone and propranolol) may also have preventative effects.

Natural

Rhodiola rosea, chamomile, probiotics, oral lavender, aromatherapy (e.g. lavender scent).

Psychotherapies

Therapy is usually more effective than medication for anxiety, particularly in the long-term. One of the paradoxes of therapy for anxiety is that anxiety is actually a normal and healthy reaction, so the goal of therapy is not to make anxiety go away completely. Rather, good therapy for anxiety helps you redirect your attitudes and actions so that you manage anxiety better and have less fearful avoidance.

Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), mindfulness, acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT), hypnotherapy, progressive muscle relaxation. Specific therapies for trauma-related anxiety include eye movement desensitization (EMDR) and CBT.

Medication to Enhance Therapy

Cycloserine is a medicine which enhances the brain’s learning abilities. It can be used along with specific therapies for anxiety to help people recover faster.

Benzodiazepines

Benzodiazepines can be taken as-needed for anxiety but it is best to take them as little as possible: anxiety has been found to worsen in the long term when they are used. Although they help reduce anxiety in the short term, they also prevent the brain from processing and learning ways to overcome anxiety. For this reason, benzodiazepines can reduce the benefits of psychotherapy for anxiety if they are taken while in therapy. Benzodiazepines can also cause addiction and memory impairment if used long-term.

Benzodiazepines: Clonazepam (klonopin and wafers), diazepam (valium), lorazepam (ativan), oxazepam (serax), alprazolam (xanax, xanax-xr), temazepam (restoril), chlordiazepoxide (librium), clorazepate (tranxene), estazolam (prosom), flurazepam (dalmane), quazepam (dural), triazolam (halcion)

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)

OCD is a type of anxiety caused by repetitive, intrusive thoughts, doubts and worries. It usually causes people to engage in compulsions to find short-term relief, though these compulsions make the anxiety worse in the long term. Examples of compulsions include checking things, counting, repeating things, rituals, cleaning and sorting.

Medication

Fluvoxamine (luvox) and other SSRI antidepressants, clomipramine (anafranil), ondansetron (zofran), granisetron (sancuso), memantine (namenda), aripiprazole (abilify), olanzapine (zyprexa, symbyax), risperidone (risperdal), quetiapine (seroquel), topiramate (topamax).

Natural

N-acetylcysteine (NAC, cerefolin), omega-3 (fish oil).

Psychotherapy

Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) with exposure-response prevention (in group or individual format).

Psychosis

Psychosis means that your brain's ability to perceive and sense reality has been altered. Common symptoms include paranoia and hearing things or seeing things that aren't there. Psychosis can happen for many reasons, including fever and medical conditions. Psychiatric conditions that commonly cause psychosis include schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, depression, and substance abuse.

Atypical Antipsychotics

Atypicals: Aripiprazole (abilify), asenapine (saphris), brexpiprazole (rexulti), cariprazine (vraylar), iloperidone (fanapt), lurasidone (latuda), olanzapine (zyprexa), paliperidone (invega), quetiapine (seroquel), risperidone (risperdal), ziprasidone (geodon).

Typical Antipsychotics

Chlorpromazine (thorazine), chlorprothixene (truxal), thioridazine (mellaril), mesoridazine, levomepromazine, loxapine (loxitane), molindone (moban), perphenazine (trilafon), thiothixene (navane), trifluoperazine (stelazine), haloperidol (haldol), fluphenazine (prolixin), droperidol, zuclopenthixol (clopixol), flupentixol (depixol), prochlorperazine.

Clozapine

Clozapine (clozaril) is the only antipsychotic which can work better than all the others. It should be considered if nothing else is working, but it has serious health risks associated with it so shouldn't be your first choice.

Natural

These treatments do not help psychosis, but help brain function and depression in people who have developed psychosis: N-acetylcysteine (NAC, cerefolin), omega-3 (fish oil).

ADHD

Stimulants

Methylphenidate (ritalin, concerta, metadate, daytrana, quillivant), des-methylphenidate (focalin), amphetamine salts (adderall, evekeo, adzenys, dyanavel), dexedrine (vyvanse, zenzedi).

Non-stimulants

Atomoxetine (strattera), modafinil (nuvigil), armodafinil (provigil), guanfacine (intuniv), clonidine (kapvay), bupropion (wellbutrin, budeprion, aplenzin).

Natural

Vayarin, omega-3 (fish oil).

Psychotherapies

Coaching and skill-building therapies, including cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT).

Memory and Concentration

Concentration problems are a feature of most psychiatric disorders, and unfortunately they are often one of the last symptoms to improve. Although these concentration problems can resemble ADHD, they are not due to the same brain changes as ADHD, so treatments for ADHD usually do not work or can make the problem worse. Medications for memory are all designed to prevent dementia from getting worse, and do not work for other kinds of memory problems.

Ask us about behavioral and dietary approaches which can improve concentration. There is also a behavioral group therapy that improves concentration.

Natural

N-acetylcysteine (NAC, cerefolin), vayacog, vayarin, sensoril, curcumin, cocoaiva, ginkgo, citicoline.

Medications

There are no medications for concentration but some treatments used for mood disorders have cognitive benefits: lamotrigine (lamictal), modafinil (provigil), armodafinil (nuvigil), pramipexole (mirapex), vortioxetine (trintellix), bupropion (wellbutrin, budeprion, aplenzin), guanfacine, clonidine. Valacyclovir (valtrex) improves cognition in carries of the herpes/hsv virus.

Sleep

z-Hypnotic Sleep Medicines

Eszopiclone (lunesta), zaleplon (sonata), zolpidem (ambien, ambien-CR, edluar), short-acting zolpidem (intermezzo).

Other Sleep Medicines

Belsomra (suvorexant), ramelteon (rozerem), doxepin (silenor), trazodone (desyrl), gabapentin (neurontin), melatonin.

Natural

Melatonin, valerian, melatonin with zinc and magnesium.

Devices

Blue-light filtering glasses (moodtreatmentcenter.com/bluelight.pdf), dawn simulator (moodtreatmentcenter.com/dawnsimulator.pdf), alpha-stimulator (www.alpha-stim.com).

Psychotherapies

Sleep hygiene, cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), mindfulness.

For Nightmares

Prasozin, doxazosin, tiagabine (gabitril), cyproheptadine.

Psychotherapy: Imagery rehearsal therapy, eye movement desensitization (EMDR).

Eating Disorders

Binge Eating

Vyvanse, topiramate (topamax), zonisamide, fluoxetine (prozac), zoloft (sertraline), luvox (fluvoxamine), duloxetine (cymbalta), imipramine, baclofen, chromium picolinate, atomoxetine (strattera), modafinil (provigil), armodafinil (nuvigil), inositol, protein supplements, moderate exercise.

Bulimia (Binge & Purge)

Topiramate (topamax), fluoxetine (prozac), luvox (fluvoxamine), ondansetron (zofran), buspar (buspirone), lightbox, moderate exercise.

Anorexia

Olanzapine (zyprexa), cyproheptadine, zinc supplement.

Psychotherapies

Family approaches (Maudsley), residential treatment, cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), 12-step (e.g. overeaters anonymous), nutritional counseling, mindfulness-based eating, interpersonal therapy, dialectical behavior therapy (DBT).

Addiction

Alcohol

Acamprosate (campral), naltrexone, disulfiram (antabuse), gabapentin (neurontin), topiramate (topamax), memantadine (namenda), zonisamide, ondansetron (zofran), granisetron (sancuso), baclofen, N-acetylcysteine (NAC, cerefolin).

Opioids

Naltrexone (vivitrol), suboxone, clonidine.

Cocaine

Modafinil (provigil), armodafinil (nuvigil), topiramate (topamax), citicoline.

Marajuanna

Gabapentin (neurontin), topiramate (topamax), N-acetylcysteine (NAC, cerefolin).

Nicotine

Varenicline (chantix), nicotine replacements, bupropion (wellbutrin, budeprion, aplenzin, zyban), melatonin (low-dose), clonidine, N-acetylcysteine (NAC, cerefolin).

Psychotherapies

Motivational enhancement, cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), dialectical behavior therapy (DBT), contingency management, group therapy, 12-step programs, intensive-outpatient programs and therapeutic communities.

Relieving Side Effects

Usually it is best to manage side effects by reducing the dosage or changing to a more tolerable treatment. If that can't be accomplished, there are treatments that can directly reduce side effects.

Weight gain

Topamax, orlistat, zonisamide, wellbutrin/naltrexone combination.

For weight gain on atypical antipsychotics:

Metformin, nizatidine, melatonin

Sexual dysfunction

Viagra, cialis, levitra, flibanserin, wellbutrin, buspirone, mirtazapine, trazodone, yohimbine, cyproheptadine, ginkgo, maca root, zestra, arginmax. Aspirin (if taking lithium).

Hair Loss

Biotin, selenium, zinc, minoxidil (rogaine)

Sweating

Terazosin, clonidine, oxybutynin, cogentin, glycopyrolate, mirtazapine, cyproheptadine

Itching

Hydroxyzine, doxepin, aveeno oatmeal bath, sarna lotion

Acne

Doxycycline, tetracycline

Diarrhea

Probiotics, loperamide, metamucil, milk of magnesia, amphojel, bismuth subsalicylate

Constipation

Colace, methylcellulose, psyllium seed, senna, metoclopramide, bethanechol

Nausea

Ginger tabs, ondansetron, promethazine

Dry Mouth

Sugarless gum (Spry), biotene, evoxac, pilocarpine

Drooling

Glycopyrrolate

Tremor

Propranolol, vitamin B6, primidone

Restlessness on antipsychotics (akathisia)

Propranolol, betaxolol, vitamin B6, pramipexole, ropinorole, trazodone, gabapentin, mirtazapine, cyproheptadine, diphenhydramine

Muscle tension/contractions on antipsychotics (dystonia)

Benzotropine (cogentin)

Unwanted movements on antipsychotics (tardive dyskinesia)

Ginkgo extract (egb-761), tarvil, keppra.
Prevention: vitamin E, lithium

Teeth grinding (bruxism)

Propranolol, buspirone, gabapentin, magnesium

Leg cramps

Gabapentin, vitamin E, vitamin B-complex, calcium

Ear ringing (tinnitus)

Melatonin