

IS PSYCHOTROPIC MEDICATION RIGHT FOR ME?

Deciding whether medication might be beneficial to you should be a thoughtful process discussed with your healthcare provider. A doctor-patient relationship in which trust, mutual respect and open communication exists is one of the keys to successful treatment. Always consider your options (perhaps get a second opinion), weigh the risks and make the best, most informed decision for yourself.

SOME KEY FACTORS TO CONSIDER

- What is the diagnosis, and why is a particular medication recommended? What symptom relief can you expect and when?
- What should you do if you miss a dose?
- What are common side effects (routine or predicted reactions) and how long will they last? Be aware of possible adverse reactions, such as rash, severe headaches, nausea, vomiting, breathing difficulties, etc., and contact your provider if they occur.
- What initial and ongoing medical tests/lab work (usually to rule out other medical problems and establish a baseline from which to gauge the therapeutic dose for you) are required?
- How long will you be on medication, and how do you discontinue (taper off) the drug?
- What is the cost of medication per month and over the longer term? If you are financially strained, are there other options or prescription assistance available?
- Will your routine activities or diet be restricted in any way?
- What follow-up medication appointments and treatment sessions are required?

Including psychotropic medication in your mental health plan can make a difference in quality of life and be a part of reaching academic and life goals.

MAKE AN APPOINTMENT

Call

512.245.2208

San Marcos location and hours

LBJ Student Center, Room 5-4.1
8 a.m. – 5 p.m., Monday – Friday

Round Rock location

Nursing Building, Room 116
1555 University Blvd.

Check our website for current hours.

ONLINE RESOURCES

Website

counseling.txstate.edu



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TEXAS STATE
COUNSELING CENTER

601 University Drive
5-4.1 LBJ Student Center
San Marcos, TX 78666

512.245.2208 | counselingcenter@txstate.edu

PSYCHOTROPIC MEDICATION



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HOW CAN PSYCHOTROPIC DRUGS HELP?

Psychotropic medications can be prescribed by psychiatrists, other licensed physicians and advanced nurse practitioners who are experienced in prescribing and monitoring psychotropic medication. Other types of providers also prescribe these drugs, and they may request or recommend that you meet with a psychiatrist for diagnostic and treatment purposes. Medication is prescribed when symptoms of mental or emotional illness are severe, persistent and interfere with normal functioning.

These medications can help reduce symptoms such as:

- depression
- anxiety
- agitation
- sleep disruptions
- confused thinking
- obsessive thinking
- poor concentration
- mood swings
- altered perceptions and sensations

Psychotropic medications are designed to affect the mind, emotions and behavior, and they can be an important complement to counseling services in your overall treatment. Psychotropic medication is typically more effective when combined with psychotherapy and can help to reduce challenging symptoms while you develop coping tools and strategies in counseling. For example, medication may help alleviate severe symptoms of panic while counseling helps you change unhelpful patterns of thinking and behavior.

HOW DO THEY WORK?

Psychotropic/psychiatric medications influence the brain chemicals (neurotransmitters) that regulate emotions and thought patterns. Medications may be prescribed as a short-term aid only to be taken for a few months or may be prescribed longer term. Taking medication under a doctor's care ensures the proper usage and minimizes the chance of abuse or dependency.

ARE THEY EFFECTIVE?

Medication is not a magic cure for emotional or psychological pain. The most effective treatment includes counseling whenever psychotropic drugs are prescribed. Some medications may work better for one person than for another, and providers may regularly review your clinical records, family history, lab work, blood tests, dietary restrictions and lifestyle changes to assess your prescription's effectiveness. It may be helpful to let a close friend or loved one know that you have started taking a new medication (without necessarily specifying what it is) and to discuss positive or negative changes with you.

If you feel that a medication is not working or are experiencing side effects, consult with your healthcare provider immediately to discuss your concerns. Stopping medication should be done gradually to allow your brain to adjust to the resulting chemical changes. Any "tapering off" process should be monitored by your provider.

