THE OBSERVATORY · REFERENCE EPISODE 10

Questions to bring to your prescriber

SSRIs and adjacent medications

For an appointment where medicine for depression or anxiety might come up. Your medical doctor or psychiatrist decides what, if anything, to prescribe. Fill in the first part before you go, take the questions in with you, and use the tracker on the back once you start anything.

BEFORE YOU GO: WHAT TO WRITE DOWN

What I've noticed. How long the low mood or the worry has been around, and what it's changed in an ordinary week.

Two or three recent examples. What happened, and what it cost me.

Past medicines. Any I've tried before, the dose if I know it, and what happened.

Everything I take. Prescriptions (including ADHD medicine), over-the-counter painkillers, supplements, alcohol, cannabis, nicotine, caffeine.

Family history. Anyone in my family with bipolar disorder, depression or anxiety.

Anything else. Pregnancy or plans for one, seizures, an eating disorder now or in the past, heart rhythm or blood pressure, chronic pain, heavy drinking or liver problems.

QUESTIONS FOR MY PRESCRIBER

1. What is this meant to help, and how will we know if it's working?
2. What's common in the first month, and what should make me call the same day?
3. What sexual side effects might come up, and what would we do about them?
4. Should I take it in the morning or at night?
5. How does it fit with my ADHD medicine, and is there anything to watch for together?
6. Does it interact with anything on my list, including painkillers like aspirin or Advil?
7. Does the boxed warning apply at my age, and who should be watching for changes?
8. Does this one need blood pressure checks?
9. How long would I stay on it, and how would we stop when it's time?
10. If this one isn't right, what's next, and how long before we decide?
11. Would genetic testing change anything for me?
12. Is there a generic, and what will it cost? I'll check GoodRx before I fill it.
13. If I'd rather not take medication, or want therapy too, what's on the table?

Education, not advice. Nothing on this sheet tells you what to take; it helps you ask. Your medical doctor or psychiatrist knows you and can prescribe.
Produced by Lone Star Telehealth. Logan Williamson is a Licensed Professional Counselor in Texas and Louisiana. lonestartelehealth.com/observatory

Answers, notes and a daily tracker

ANSWERS AND NOTES

DAILY TRACKER (ONE LINE A DAY, ONCE YOU START)

Mood and worry: 1 is worst, 5 is best.

DATE	DOSE AND TIME	SLEEP	STOMACH AND APPETITE	MOOD, 1 TO 5	WORRY, 1 TO 5	ANYTHING NEW

Bring two weeks of lines to the next appointment. The labels advise against stopping these medicines suddenly. Talk to the prescriber first.

If you're in crisis, call or text 988.

Education, not advice. This sheet does not diagnose anything and does not recommend any medication. Your prescriber is the expert; take your questions to them.
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