

Patient Instructions for Starting SSRIs

Delayed Efficacy - This is not a medication like the Tylenol that makes you feel better right after you take it. It is a medication that you need to take every day, regardless of how you feel. After you have taken the medication for 2-3 weeks, you may start to feel better, but it can take up to 2 months (8 weeks) to get the full effect from a given dose of the medication.

Acute Side Effects - Side effects can start after the first dose. While your body adjusts to the medication, you may experience side effects like nausea, diarrhea, decreased appetite, trouble sleeping, sedation, dizziness, headaches, increased anxiety or agitation. These early side effects will usually go away within 1-2 weeks if you continue to take the medication.

***for people 25 years or younger** - Very rarely, children and young adults can experience an increase in suicidal thinking when they start this medication. If you start to have thoughts about killing yourself, remember that this can be a side effect of this medication. Stop taking it and give me a call.

Chronic Side Effects - This medication is generally well tolerated, but sometimes people experience weight gain, problems with sexual functioning, or increased sweating. These side effects may last for as long as you take the medication. They can often be managed and will go away once the medication is stopped. Please let me know if you experience any of these side effects.

If you experience any side effect that makes you want to stop the medication, please contact me.