

MOOD STABILIZERS FOR BIPOLAR DISORDER

Group Main Use	Medication Brand/Generic	Form	Dose Schedule	Dose Range	Most Common Side Effects for Group	Pros for Group	Cautions for Group
Mood stabilizers (Bipolar)	Eskalith CR 450 Lithobid Lithonate Lithotab Lithium Carbonate Li2 Co3	Capsules Tablets 300mg 450mg	2 to 4 times a day	Blood level 0.6-1.2	Lithium: nausea, GI irritation, diarrhea, vomiting, lower thyroid function, kidney function, may increase white blood cells, tremor, skin rashes. If dose too high side effects increase, may increase appetite.	Mood stabilizers are first choice for Bipolar Disorder. They are also used to help the effects of antidepressants or help impulse control, violence. Lithium is the best studied and may also treat unipolar depression. Tegretol, Topamax, Neurontin, Lamictal, Zonegran, and Depakote are also used for seizures.	Lithium has more nuisance side effects but usually not serious except in an overdose. Requires periodic blood tests of lithium level, kidney and thyroid function. Depakote may rarely seriously harm the liver or pancreas or decrease platelets (clotting) therefore periodically check blood
	Depakote valproic acid Depakote ER	Tablets 125mg	2 to 3 times a day	Blood level 50-125	Depakote: sedation (usually mild),	Depakote may	

Mood stabilizers (Bipolar)	valproate divalproex	250mg 500mg ER=Extended Release 250 mg 500mg Sprinkles (capsules) 125mg			may increase appetite, occasionally associated with mild to moderate hair loss. GI irritation. May increase energy.	best help rapid cycling and mixed mania/depression. Lamotrigine and Lithium best treat Bipolar depressed phase. Other than the potential severe rash, lamotrigine has few side effects. no lab tests or EKG needed. All these may help migraines and nerve pain (gabapentin).	level of medicine, liver, and CBC. Depakote and Lithium may increase weight. All mood stabilizers should be avoided in pregnancy, especially Lithium. Lamotrigine may cause a severe, dangerous rash, any age but especially in youth. Avoid with Depakote and increase dose slowly.
	Lamictal (lamotrigine)	Tablets 25, 100, 150, 200mg XR Tablets 25, 50, 100, 200mg	1 to 2 times a day	100-600mg often 200-400mg	Nausea, dizzy, unsteady gait, double or blurry vision, headache, sedation. Rash, sometimes severe.		
	Neurontin (gabapentin)	Capsules 100mg 300mg 400mg Tablets 600mg 800mg	2 to 3 times a day	800 to 2400mg No blood level Target 900 to 1800mg	Sedation (usually mild to moderate) dizzy, unsteady gait, fatigue.	Generics available. Gabapentin low in side effects, may also help sleep, anxiety, and pain, and decrease	

Mood stabilizers (Bipolar)						alcohol abuse. It also may help perimenopausal symptoms. No lab tests needed. Gabapentin has very few, if any, significant interactions.	
	Tegretol carbamazepine	Tablets 100mg (chewable) 200mg XR (extended release) 100mg, 200mg, 400mg suspension 100mg/5ml	2 to 3 times a day XR one or 2 times a day	Blood level 4-12	Tegretol: sedation, dizziness, nausea, double vision, unsteady gait if level high, usually mild insignificant drop in blood counts.	Tegretol XR, Carbatrol, and Equetro are all extended release form of carbamazepine.	Interactions may be significant and varied with Tegretol.
	Carbatrol		twice a day				All mood stabilizers should be avoided in pregnancy.
	Equetro	Capsules 200mg, 300mg	twice a day	600-2400mg/day no blood level	Similar to Tegretol without blood count risks and less interactions.		Hyponatremia (low sodium) risk is increased with Trileptal.
	Trileptal oxcarbazepine	Capsules 100, 200, 300mg Scored tablets	twice a day				Tegretol (carbamazepine) may rarely seriously lower blood counts. Thus periodic

		<p>150mg, 300mg, 600mg suspension 300mg/5ml</p>				<p>Trileptal can be seen as a refined Tegretol without the many interactions or blood count risks. Thus, no regular blood tests.</p>	<p>blood testing is needed.</p> <p>All of the medications in this table have shown limited benefit in research studies so should only be tried if all those in the previous table were ineffective or had serious side effects.</p>
	<p>Topamax (topiramate)</p>	<p>Tablets: 25mg 100mg 200mg capsules (sprinkles): 15mg 25mg</p>	<p>2 times a day</p>	<p>Up to 200-400mg No blood level</p>	<p>Sedation, dizzy, unsteady gait, slower or fuzzy thinking, nervousness</p>	<p>Topamax also may help decrease alcohol abuse.</p> <p>Topamax and ZONEGRAN may cause weight loss.</p>	<p>Topiramate rarely causes eye pain, glaucoma, osteoporosis, heat intolerance, or kidney stones, and may increase cleft lip or palate if taken while pregnant.</p>