Questions to ask before starting an SSRI or SNRI

Print this. Bring it to the visit. Write the clinician's answers next to each question.

ABOUT THE MEDICATION ITSELF

1. Which specific medication and why this one for me? 2. Starting dose and expected target dose? 3. How long before I should notice a change? 4. How will we decide if it is working?

SIDE EFFECTS

5. Most common side effects in the first two weeks? 6. Which side effects to report immediately vs which usually pass? 7. Any side effects more likely because of my age, other conditions, or medications? 8. Less common but important effects (sexual side effects, weight changes, sleep changes, emotional blunting, bleeding risk)?

SAFETY

9. Any risk of mood destabilization given my history (family history of bipolar, prior mood elevations)? 10. What do I do if I have suicidal thoughts on this medication? Is there a number to call? 11. Anything to avoid (alcohol, other medications, supplements, foods)?

INTERACTIONS

12. Do any of my current medications, supplements, or OTC products interact? 13. Do I need to tell other clinicians (dentist, surgeon, urgent care) that I am on it?

FOLLOW-UP PLAN

14. Next visit and what we will cover. 15. How to reach you between visits. 16. Plan if the medication is not working after we reach the target dose.

STOPPING AND ACCESS

17. If I need to stop, how will we taper? What withdrawal effects should I expect? 18. Anything I should not stop suddenly? 19. Insurance coverage and generic option? 20. Refill safely if I switch pharmacies or travel?

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