

When an SSRI Isn't Enough: Next Steps for Anxiety

Why This?

Sometimes an antidepressant reduces anxiety but doesn't finish the job. "Augmentation" means adding a second, usually well-tolerated medicine to help symptoms and provide steadier or faster relief while you continue core treatment.

What we'll do together

- Keep the goal realistic: not zero anxiety, but manageable anxiety for everyday life.
- Pair medicines with skills: sleep routine, brief daily movement, paced breathing, mindfulness, journaling, and limiting caffeine/alcohol.
- Choose an add-on together based on your symptoms and preferences:
 - **Fast-acting options** (often felt within days): hydroxyzine (antihistamine), pregabalin, gabapentin, or propranolol (for body symptoms or performance situations).
 - **Builds gradually** (weeks): buspirone (taken daily).
 - **PRN vs daily**: some medicines can be taken as-needed for spikes; others work best when taken every day.

What to expect

- We'll start with a dose that fits you and adjust based on benefit and side effects.
- Common, usually short-lived effects may include sleepiness, light-headedness, dry mouth, or stomach upset. Tell us what you feel—there are workarounds.

Call us urgently or seek care now if you have:

- Fainting, severe shortness of breath/wheezing, very slow heartbeat, chest pain, or severe dizziness.
- Rash/swelling or trouble breathing after a new medicine.
- You become pregnant, are planning pregnancy, or are breastfeeding and need to update your plan.

Patient Handout

Your weekly plan (check one box each day):

Day	Took med as planned	Practiced 10-minute calming skill	Anxiety 0-10	Notes
Mon	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Tue	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Wed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Thu	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Fri	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Sat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Sun	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
