

### Summary for Switching Medications

<u>Diagnosis</u>	<u>Timeline for Early Response of Symptoms</u>
Major Depressive Disorder (MDD)	≥ 20% improvement in symptom score (utilizing a patient monitoring tool e.g. PHQ-9) within 2-4 weeks of starting treatment
General Anxiety Disorder (GAD)	≥ 50% improvement in symptom score (utilizing a patient monitoring tool e.g. GAD-7) within 6-8 weeks of starting treatment

<u>Switching or Adding?</u>	
<u>Consider Switch</u>	<u>Consider Adjunctive</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Little to no improvement with the first medication trial</li> <li>- Ongoing intolerable side effects</li> <li>- More time available to wait (less severe condition/impairment)</li> <li>- Patient preference on being on a single agent versus two agents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Two or more antidepressant trials</li> <li>- Partial response but an adjunctive agent may help in reaching remission                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 25-49% improvement for MDD</li> <li>- &lt;50% improvement for GAD</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Initial treatment is well tolerated but an adjunctive agent may help in reaching remission</li> <li>- Patient with partial response does not want to go through the process of initiating another agent again</li> </ul>

<u>Strategies for Switching</u>	<u>How</u>
Direct Switch	Stopping current antidepressant abruptly and beginning new treatment the next day
Taper and switch immediately (sequentially)	Gradual taper of current antidepressant followed by an immediate start of new therapy once old therapy has been completely tapered.
Taper and switch after washout (sequentially)	Gradual taper of current antidepressant followed by a washout period. New treatment will then begin after the washout period has been completed.
Cross tapering (concurrent)	Taper the first antidepressant while slowly titrating the new therapy simultaneously.

\* Strategies for switching antidepressants are based on their drug classes, pharmacokinetics/ pharmacodynamic profiles

<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>Washout Time (from complete discontinuation)</u>
MAOI (irreversible)	All other agents	2 weeks (Do not combine/cross taper)
SSRI, SNRI, NaSSA, NDRI, SARI, TCA	MAOI, RIMA	5 weeks for fluoxetine* 3 weeks for vortioxetine* 2 weeks for other SSRIs,* 5-7 days NaSSA* 3-5 days NDRI* 3 days for SNRIs
SSRI, SNRI, NaSSA, NDRI, SARI, TCA	All ADs (except MAOI, RIMA)	No washout required. Crossover/combine with caution. Caution with drug interactions

SwitchRx ([www.switchrx.com](http://www.switchrx.com)) is a useful and up to date tool that helps practitioners by suggesting antidepressant switching schedules based on a patient's current treatment regimen, using the cross-taper method.