

# SHARED DECISION MAKING

## AID CARDS

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### *Anxiety*

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Provided by:

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# What You Should Know & Things to Remember

## Will this medication work for me?

- Doctors use different medicines to treat anxiety because everyone responds differently.
- Some medicines are only used short-term, while others are taken as needed or on a daily basis.
- It may take several weeks for the medicine to work at its best.
- You and your doctor might choose therapy before medications.

## Understanding side effects:

- Most people who take anxiety medicines have at least one side effect.
- Withdrawal symptoms can occur if stopped abruptly.
- Lifestyle changes can help reduce side effects.

## Things to remember:

Medication is one of many tools to help with anxiety. Changing some of your lifestyle habits can also improve your mental health such as:

- Regular therapy and or connection with supportive people
- Being active and doing some activities you enjoy
- Going to bed and waking up at the same time every day
- Spending less time on social media/limiting screen time
- Eating a healthy diet
- Limiting alcohol use

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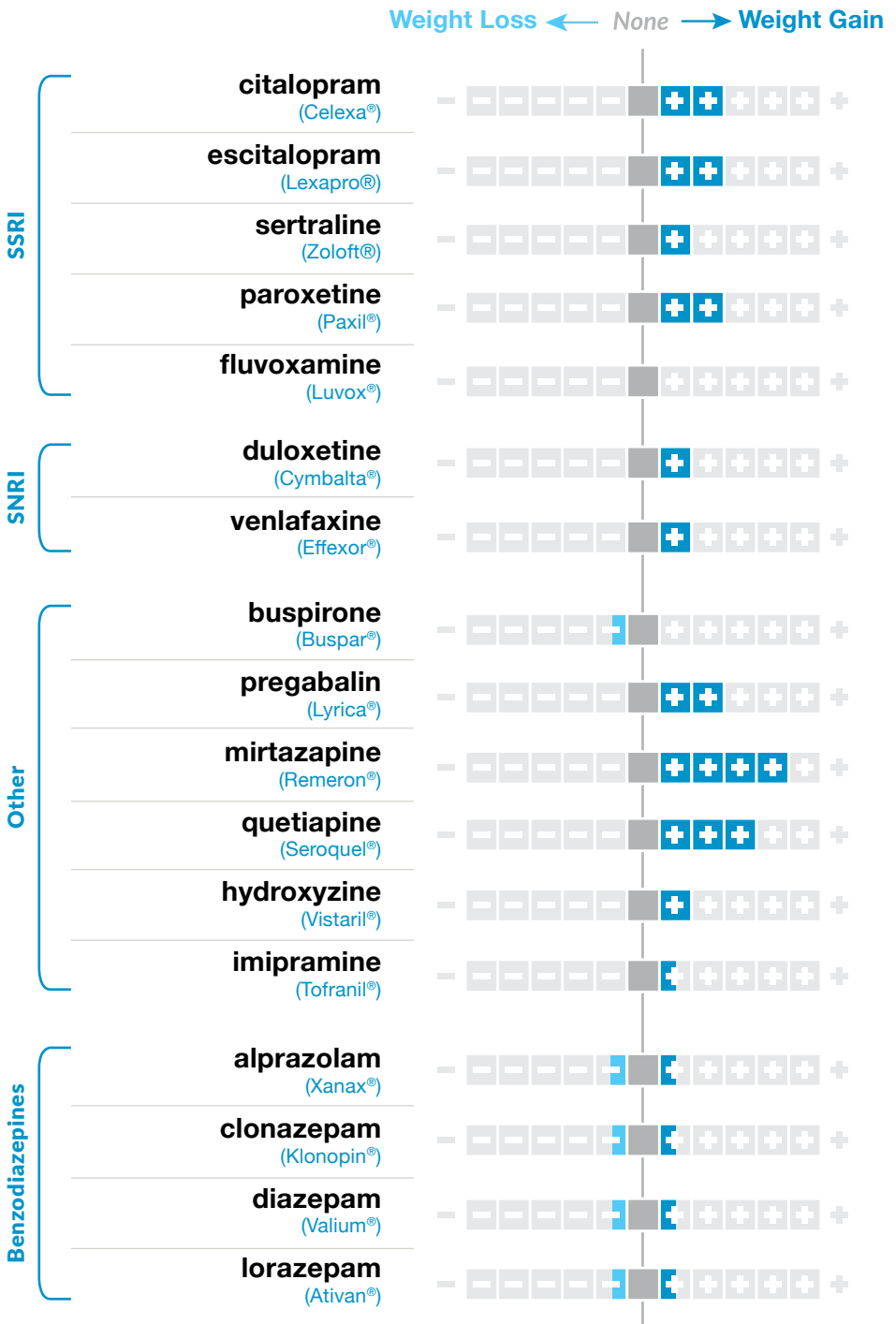
### *Anxiety*

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# Weight Change

Some people may experience weight change. It is most likely to occur over six to twelve months.



\*\*Data base on Harvard research for weight gain on benzos

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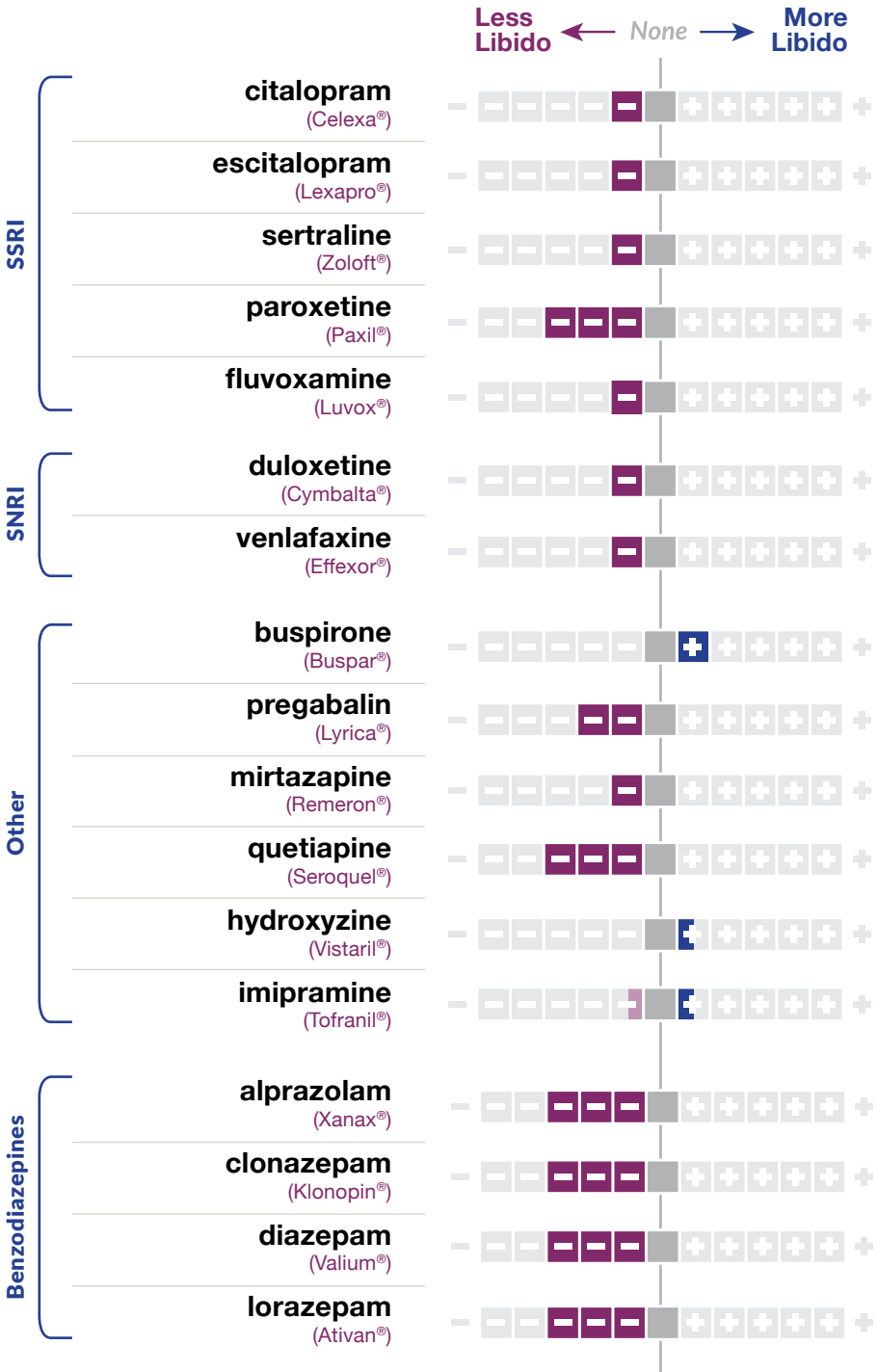
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# Sexual Side Effects

Some people may experience **changes** in sexual desire (libido) or loss of ability to reach orgasm because of their medication. Additional side effects may include erectile dysfunction. Speak with your doctor if this occurs.



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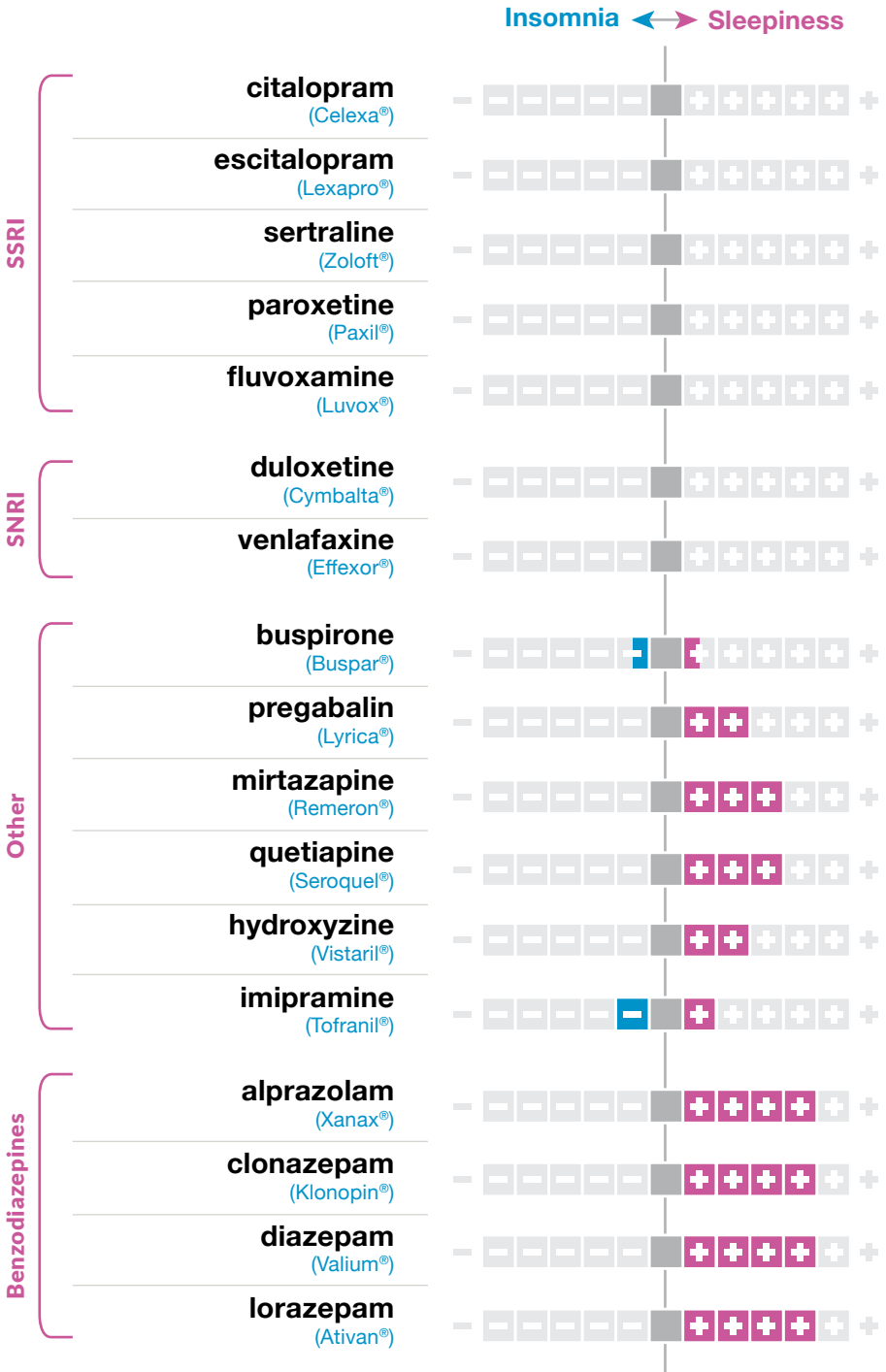
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# Sleep

Some people may experience sleepiness or insomnia because of their medicine.



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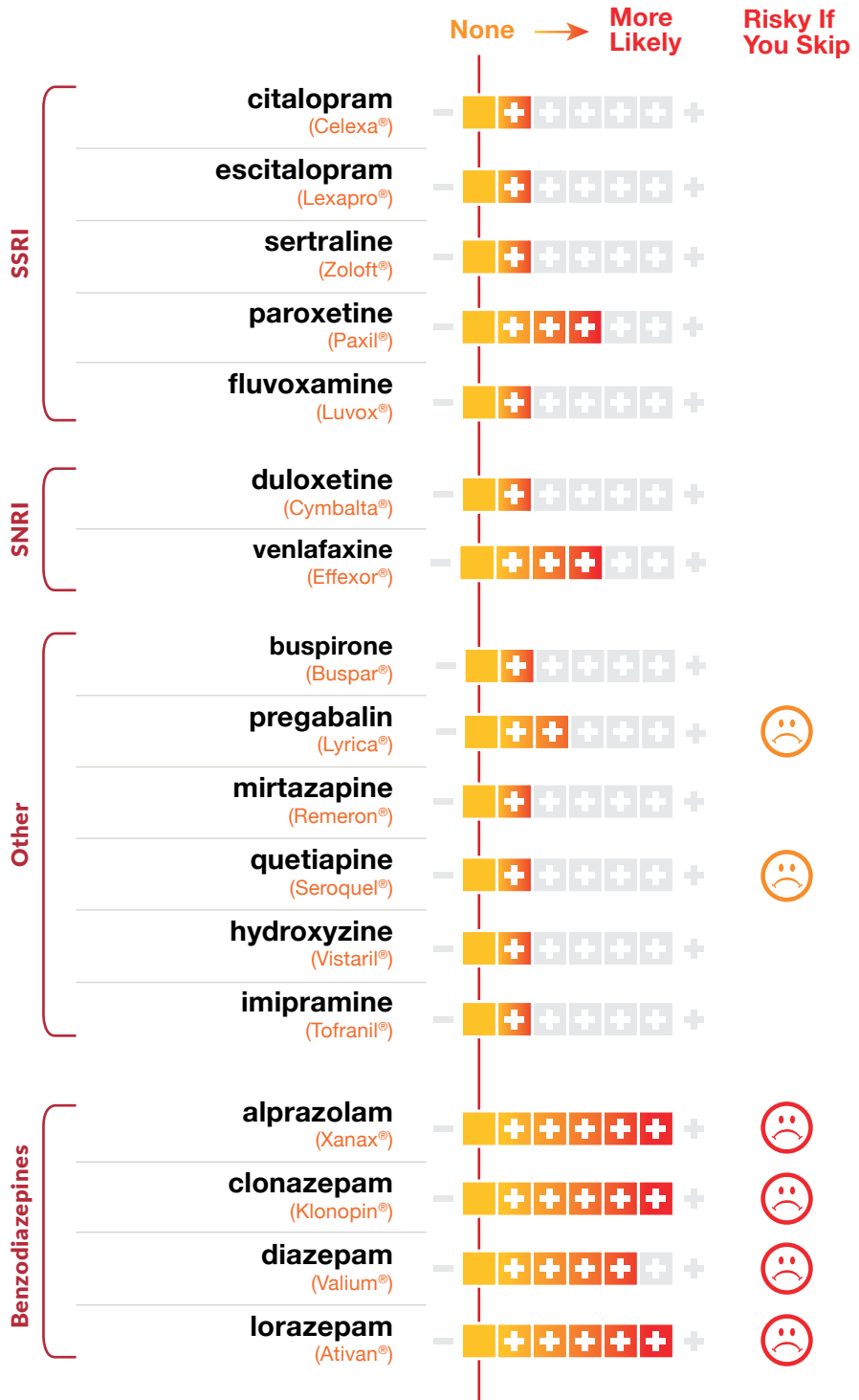
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# Stopping Approach

Quitting your medicine all at once can make you feel sick, as if you had the flu. Stopping benzodiazepines abruptly can be life threatening (e.g. seizures).



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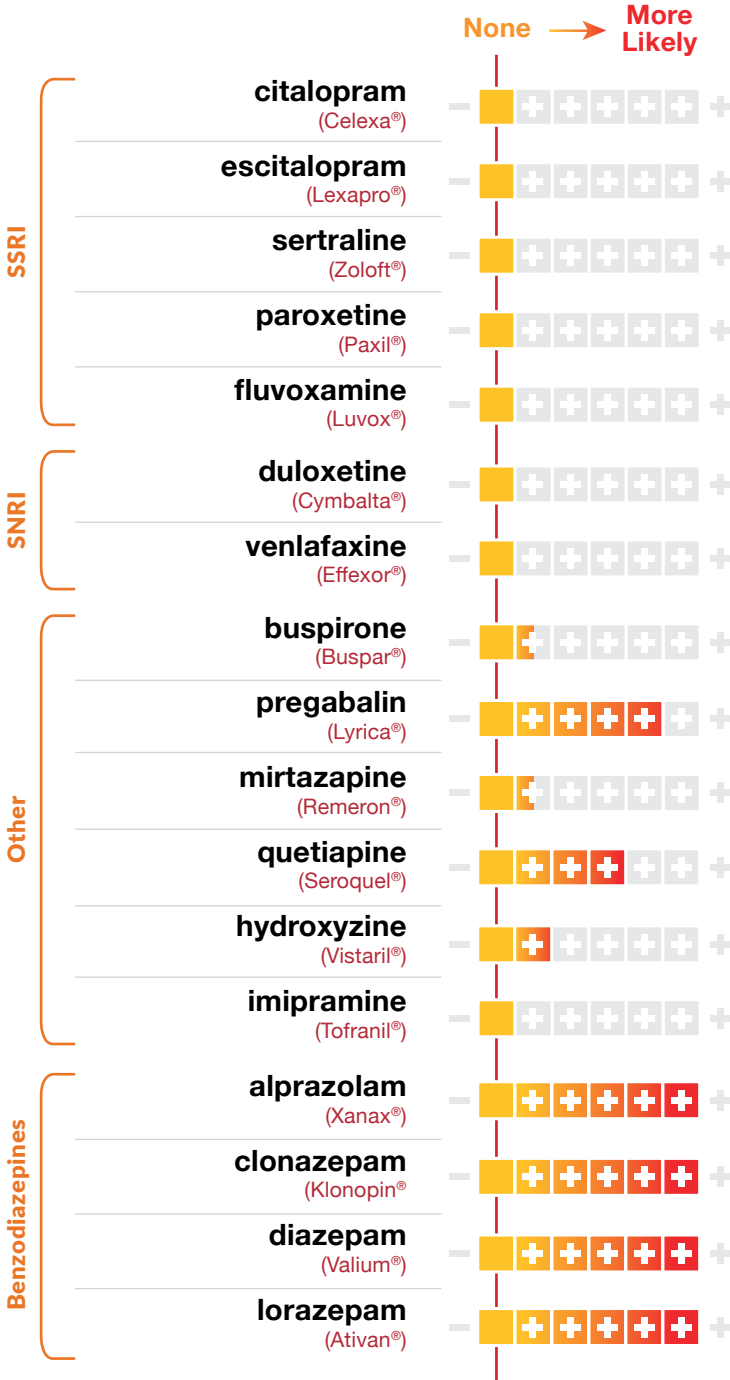
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# Risk of Misuse

Anxiety medicine can be misused. Medicine should never be shared and should be secured in a safe place.

Some risks of benzodiazepine use include:

- physical dependence, even after a short period of use
- addiction and overdose, especially in combination with other drugs or alcohol



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