

Table. Medications for Managing CFS Symptoms

CLASS OF DRUG	DRUG NAME	DOSAGE
Sleep Improvement		
<i>Sleep sustainers (drugs used off-label to assist sleep)</i>	amitriptyline	10-100 mg
	doxepin	10-100 mg
	trazodone	25-150 mg
	mirtazapine	7.5-15 mg
	tizanidine	2-16 mg
	cyclobenzaprine	5-10 mg
	gabapentin	300-1200 mg
	quetiapine	12.5-100 mg
<i>Sedative/hypnotics (drugs approved specifically for sleep)</i>	zolpidem	5-10 mg
	zaleplon	5-10 mg
	eszopiclone	1, 2, or 3 mg
	ramelteon	8 mg
<i>Benzodiazepines -- short-acting</i>	temazepam	15-30 mg
<i>long-acting</i>	clonazepam	0.5-1 mg
Anticonvulsants <i>(Used in CFS for pain relief, migraine, sleep, and as mood stabilizers)</i>		
	gabapentin	100-1800 mg
	pregabalin	150-450 mg
	topiramate	25-200 mg
	lamotrigine	25-200 mg
	zonisamide	25-200 mg
	divalproex	250-500 mg
Stimulants/Cognitive Agents <i>(Used in CFS for wakefulness and mental acuity)</i>		
	modafinil	200 mg
	amphetamine salts	5-30 mg
	methylphenidate	5-20 mg 2-3 times per day
	atomoxetine	10-40 mg
	bupropion	100-300 mg each morning

Muscle Relaxants <i>(Used in CFS for muscle spasms, cramping, pain, sleep)</i>		
	tizanidine	2-12 mg
	cyclobenzaprine	5-10 mg
	metaxalone	800 mg up to 3 times daily
	methocarbamol	750-1500 mg up to 3 times daily
	orphenadrine	100 mg up to 2 times daily
Antidepressants		
<i>SSRI class of antidepressants</i>	fluoxetine	5-40 mg daily
	sertraline	25-200 mg daily
	paroxetine	10-40 mg daily
	citalopram	10-60 mg daily
	escitalopram	10-20 mg daily
	mirtazapine	15-45 mg daily
<i>SNRI class of antidepressants</i>	venlafaxine	37.5-300 mg daily
	duloxetine	30-60 mg daily
<i>Other antidepressants</i>	bupropion	100-300 mg each morning
	trazodone	25-150 mg nightly
Restless Legs Syndrome		
	pramipexole	0.125-0.5 mg nightly
	ropinirole	0.25-2 mg nightly
	carbidopa-levodopa	25/100 nightly
Orthostatic Intolerance		
	fludrocortisone	0.1-0.3 mg
	midodrine	2.5-10 mg every 3-4 hours
	atenolol	12.5-50 mg daily
	metoprolol	25-100 mg daily in split dose
Analgesics (Pain Relief)		
<i>Nonsteroidal anti-</i>	ibuprofen	400-800 mg up to 3

<i>inflammatory</i>		times daily
	naproxen	220 mg up to 3 times daily
	meloxicam	7.5-15 mg daily
<i>COX II inhibitors</i>	celecoxib	100-200 mg daily
<i>Analgesic</i>	acetaminophen	325-3000 mg daily
<i>Short-acting narcotics/opiates</i>	propoxyphene	50-100 mg every 6 hours
	Various brands containing oxycodone, codeine, <i>or</i> hydrocodone	Doses vary
<i>Long-acting narcotics/opiates</i>	morphine sulfate	Doses and schedules vary
	fentanyl transdermal patch	25-50 mcg/day every 3 days
	oxycodone	10-40 mg 2 times a day
<i>Narcotic-like analgesics</i>	tramadol	50-100 mg 4 times daily
	tramadol with acetaminophen	1 or 2 tablets every 6 hours as needed
	sustained-release tramadol	100-300 mg once daily
<i>Topical</i>	lidocaine transdermal patch	Use as directed

SSRI = selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor; SNRI = serotonin-norepinephrine reuptake inhibitor.

While there is no FDA-approved drug for treating CFS, various pharmacologic interventions can be effective in managing the multiple symptoms of this illness. This chart lists drugs commonly prescribed by clinicians for treating the symptoms of CFS. It's not intended to be comprehensive, and healthcare professionals should keep in mind that a drug that works for one patient may not work for another.

People with CFS are highly sensitive to medications, so dosages are generally started out at a fraction of the normal dose and then adjusted to levels that are both well-tolerated and therapeutic. An effective dosage may vary considerably from patient to patient, and over time.

Some drugs act on multiple systems and symptoms. Using such drugs allows the use of fewer medications to address multiple symptoms with minimal side effects.