

MONITOR SIDE EFFECTS

Contact your doctor or counselor immediately if you

- notice any side effects
- are worried that your depression is not improving
- think about suicide

BE PATIENT

Finding the right medication and dosage that works for you can take time. It can take 4 to 6 weeks before the anti-depressants start to work well.

Many people also have to talk to their doctor again and try different medications before finding the one that works for them.



SEEK COUNSELLING

Medication can help reduce the symptoms of depression, but it does not solve the underlying problem. Counseling can help you find the cause of your depression, change negative thinking patterns and teach you new ways of coping.

HOW TO STOP ANTI-DEPRESSANTS SAFELY?

Never stop your medication on your own. Always talk to your doctor first!

Only your doctor can tell when it is OK for you to stop taking your pills. Your doctor will come up with a plan to do this. Here are a few important things to think about:

- **Never stop your medication suddenly.** You will suffer serious side effects if you do this. Your doctor will come up with a good plan to decrease and stop your medication step by step.
- **Be patient and do not hurry the process.** If during the process you experience difficulties, side effects or are worried, you need to talk to your doctor.
- **Do it at a good time.** If you are going through any big life changes or difficult circumstances, it is not a good time to try to stop your medication. Talk about your circumstances with your doctor.



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Anti-Depressant Medication

Facts & Information



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Anti-depressant medication, when used under the guidance of a doctor, can relieve some symptoms of depression. But some medicine can have serious side effects.

Also, anti-depressants alone are not enough to cure depression. To recover from depression you also need to make some life style changes.

This brochure explains.

WHEN DO YOU NEED ANTI-DEPRESSANTS?

Only your doctor can decide if medication will help you recover from depression. Your doctor should consider these things:

- the severity of your depression
- whether medication is the best option to treat your depression
- whether there are any other treatment options (for example, therapy or exercise)
- what the side effects of medication can be



Your doctor can help you realize that you need treatment for depression. They can also refer you to a mental health counselor or a psychiatrist who are the experts in mental health.

SIDE EFFECTS

Many anti-depressants cause side effects. Some side effects will go away after the first few weeks of taking the medication, but other side effects can stay or even get worse.

Possible side effects of anti-depressant medication include:

Nausea
Insomnia
Anxiety
Restlessness
Decreased sex drive
Dizziness
Weight gain
Tremors
Sweating
Sleepiness or fatigue
Dry mouth
Diarrhea
Constipation
Headaches



If you notice any side effects, contact your doctor immediately again. It is very important that you do not stop your medication (unless the side effects are life-threatening), but talk to your doctor first for

GUIDELINES FOR TAKING ANTI-DEPRESSANTS

FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS!

It is very important when taking medication that you always follow the instructions from your doctor.

- Never stop taking your pills or change your dose without talking to your doctor first.
- Do not stop taking your pills when you start to feel better.

If you stop or change the treatment too soon, the depression can come back and get worse.

You can also suffer from serious side effects (withdrawal symptoms).

