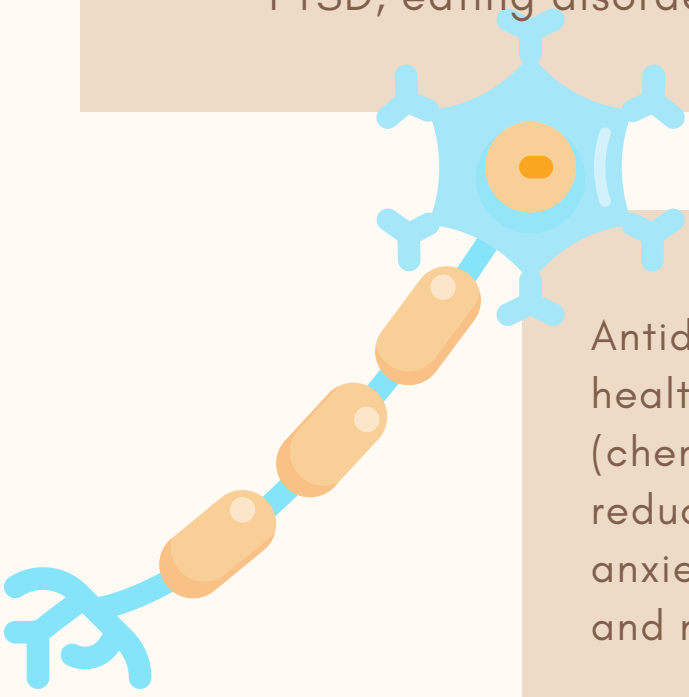


# Information Guide for Antidepressants

## Progeny Psychiatric Clinic

### WHAT ARE ANTIDEPRESSANTS USED FOR?

Antidepressants may be used to treat depression, anxiety, obsessive compulsive disorder, panic disorder, PTSD, eating disorders, and more.



### HOW DO THEY WORK?

Antidepressants help your brain restore healthy concentrations of monoamines (chemical messengers) that can help reduce the symptoms of depression or anxiety. These include serotonin, dopamine, and norepinephrine.

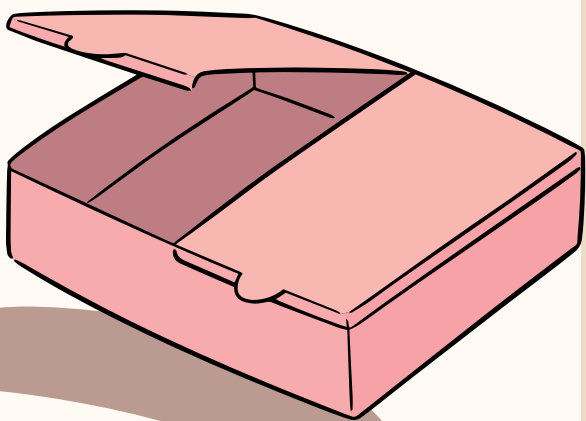
### WHEN WILL IT START WORKING?

Antidepressants do not work quickly. You can expect some improvement by the 1st month, but a full response may take up to 8 weeks.



### HOW OFTEN DO I TAKE THEM?

Make sure to follow the directions on your prescription bottle. Antidepressants should be taken daily for the best response. Forgetting to take your antidepressant can lead to unpleasant side effects and worsening of your symptoms. Never abruptly stop taking your antidepressant. Speak with your prescriber on how to wean off.



### WHO SHOULDN'T TAKE ANTIDEPRESSANTS?

Talk to your prescriber if you have a history of certain bleeding disorders, liver or kidney disease, recent heart attack, stroke, or have Bipolar Disorder. Your prescriber may avoid certain medications, recommend smaller doses, and/or need to monitor you for changes in your condition.



### WHAT IF IT DOESN'T WORK?

Antidepressants work for 4 out of 10 people and most may find some improvement in symptoms. If you do not respond to your antidepressant, your prescriber may choose to change it to one that works differently. Genetic screening may also be offered to help identify problems with drug metabolism or DNA that make certain medications less effective. If you are resistant to medications, talk to your prescriber about alternative treatments for depression including TMS and Spravato.



# Side Effect Guide

# Antidepressants

## Progeny Psychiatric Clinic

### GASTROINTESTINAL UPSET

Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, constipation, abdominal discomfort, flatulence, and acid reflux are common side effects with most antidepressants. This occurs when serotonin in the intestinal track is activated by the antidepressant. Taking your medication with food may help. These side effects are usually temporary and will go away within 1-2 weeks. Talk to your prescriber if you cannot tolerate your medication.



### FATIGUE AND SLEEPINESS

Feeling sleepy or tired is very common in the first 1-2 months of being on an antidepressant, but typically gets better with time. If you feel tired shortly after you begin your medication, try to take it before bedtime.



### HEADACHE

Headaches may occur and are typically temporary. Taking Tylenol (acetaminophen) or Motrin (ibuprofen) can help. Do not take these medications if you have an allergy or have been advised to avoid them for other reasons. Talk to your prescriber if you are having severe uncontrollable headaches.



### INSOMNIA

Changes in your sleeping habits are not uncommon. While some may sleep better, many may find themselves waking up throughout the night or feeling more restless which makes it harder to fall asleep. Talk to your prescriber if you are having difficulty getting adequate rest. Taking your medication in the morning may help. Over the counter remedies such as Melatonin or Benadryl (diphenhydramine) are commonly recommended. Prescription medications may be offered when needed.



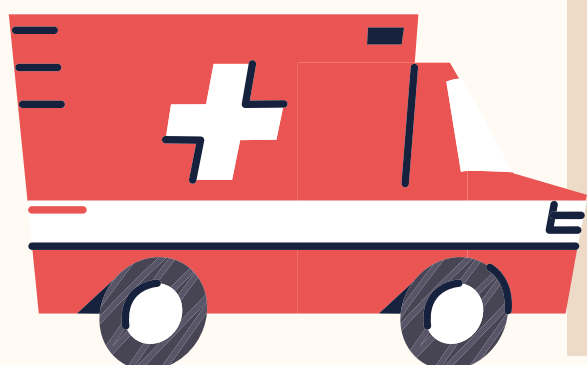
### WHY IS MY ANTIDEPRESSANT MAKING ME ANXIOUS?

Antidepressants may temporarily cause anxiety. As your body is responding to the change in serotonin concentrations, you release corticotropin releasing factor (CRF) that may make you feel more anxious. This typically gets better within the first few weeks. Try to wait and see if it improves. Talk to your prescriber if you have concerns.



### SUICIDAL IDEATION AND BEHAVIORS

Antidepressants carry a **Black Box Warning** for teenagers and young adults that may be at higher risk of experiencing suicidal ideation and/or behaviors when taking antidepressants. The cause for this is unknown. If you are having thoughts or urges to hurt yourself and feel unsafe, please call 911 or go to your nearest Emergency Department. Talk to your prescriber if you feel your antidepressant is making you feel more depressed.



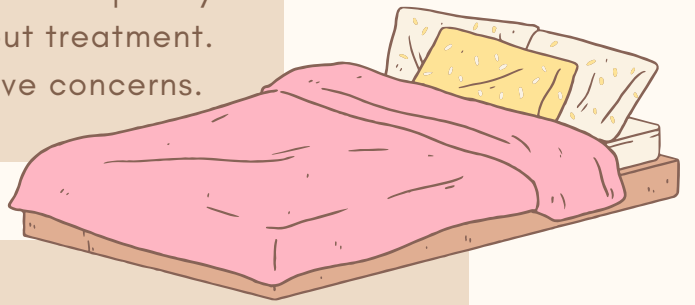
# Side Effect Guide Continued...

# Antidepressants

## Progeny Psychiatric Clinic

### LIBIDO LOSS AND SEXUAL DYSFUNCTION

Loss of sexual desire, arousal, and ability to perform sexual acts is a common reversible side effect for both men and women on many antidepressants. This is more common for SSRI antidepressants (Prozac, Zoloft, Paxil, Trintellix, etc) but may also occur in others. This side effect is temporary for some and others may notice this throughout treatment. Speak with your provider if you have concerns.



### DIZZINESS

If you feel dizzy or lightheaded, be careful to prevent falls or injuries. Get up slowly when changing positions. Dangling your feet on the side of the bed for several minutes before rising can help. Talk to your prescriber if you have significant dizziness.



### DRY MOUTH

Chewing gum or sucking on sugarless candy can help. Drink at least 8-10 glasses of water per day. Talk to your prescriber if dry mouth persists for longer than 2 weeks.



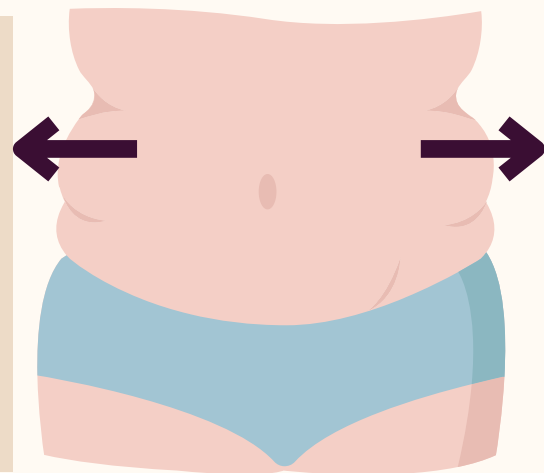
### TREMORS OR FEELING SHAKY

Some people experience shakiness in their hands, limbs, or even eyelids while taking antidepressants. If you feel shaky or have tremors, notify your prescriber. They may offer to change the medication to a new one. If you are hesitant to change your antidepressant because of fear of depression relapse, you may be offered medications that can be taken with your antidepressant and help reduce the shaking including Beta Blockers (Propranolol), Gabapentin (Neurontin), Topiramate (Topamax), Mysoline (Primidone), and benzodiazepines.



### WEIGHT GAIN AND APPETITE CHANGES

Weight gain may be experienced by some while taking antidepressants. Appetite may increase which can lead to gaining weight, while some have a decreased appetite and may lose weight. There may also be a reduction in metabolism which leads to weight gain. Make sure to eat a healthy, balanced diet and get regular exercise. Talk to your prescriber if you have concerns for weight gain.



### SEROTONIN SYNDROME

Serotonin syndrome is a serious side effect that is caused by abnormally high concentrations of serotonin that may result from taking medications that affect serotonin levels. Symptoms include feeling very shaky, restless, muscle rigidity, diarrhea, fever, sweating, elevated heart rate or blood pressure, or confusion. Mild symptoms include shivers and diarrhea, but severe symptoms may be life-threatening and include uncontrollable changes in blood pressure, heart rate, seizures, and even death. If you are experiencing any bothersome side effects, seek urgent medical attention right away if you feel sick.

