

# Antidepressant Medicines

## What are antidepressant medicines used for?

Antidepressants are medicines used to treat depression and other mental health problems such as:

- Anxiety
- Panic disorders
- Obsessive compulsive disorders
- Premenstrual syndrome
- Seasonal affective disorder

If you are taking medicine for depression, or other problems, you may feel better if you also seek counseling or therapy.

## How do they work?

The brain is made up of cells, called neurons, which communicate with each other. Messages that control many of your body functions move through your brain from cell to cell. This communication is controlled by chemicals in the brain called neurotransmitters. Some of these chemicals are very important in controlling your mood and emotions. In depression, we don't know which comes first. It may be that your depression causes too little or too much of the chemical to be present in your brain. Or it may be that too much or too little of the chemical causes your depression. Antidepressant medicines help treat the imbalance of chemicals.

Not all antidepressants affect your brain chemistry in the same way. Your healthcare provider will work with you to carefully select the right medicine for you.

## What else do I need to know about this medicine?

- Follow the directions that come with your medicine, including information about food or alcohol. Make sure you know how and when to take your medicine. Do not take more or less than you are supposed to take.
- Try to get all of your prescriptions filled at the same place. Your pharmacist can help make sure that all of your medicines are safe to take together.
- Keep a list of your medicines with you. List all of the prescription medicines, nonprescription medicines, supplements, natural remedies, and vitamins that you take. Tell all healthcare providers who treat you about all of the products you are taking.
- Many medicines have side effects. A side effect is a symptom or problem that is caused by the medicine. Ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist what side effects the medicine may cause and what you should do if you have side effects.

If you have any questions, ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for more information. Be sure to keep all appointments for provider visits or tests.

Developed by RelayHealth.

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