



SHARED DECISION MAKING FOR CHOOSING

# Antidepressant Medications



## About antidepressants

- Antidepressant medications work to increase the activity of certain chemicals (*serotonin, norepinephrine, and dopamine*) in the brain. Increasing these chemicals seems to help lessen depression and anxiety.
- Medications are only one way to treat depression and anxiety. Talk therapy, peer support, and healthy coping strategies can also be effective methods to treat depression.



## Will this medicine work for me?

- The antidepressants presented in this decision aid are all similarly effective.
- Most people with depression can find one that will make them feel better.
- Not everyone will feel better with antidepressant treatment. Some will have to try other types of treatment to find one that is right for them.



## How long before I feel better?

- Most people need to take an antidepressant regularly for at least 6 weeks to begin to get the full effect.
- Physical symptoms of depression, such as sleep, appetite, and energy, normally improve first. Full improvements in mood usually come after taking the medication for several weeks.



## About side effects

- All medications can have side effects. Some people experience little or no side effects. Others may find the side effects distressing.
- Many side effects go away after a few weeks, but some only go away once you stop the medication.
- This tool is meant as a guide. Your experience may vary. If you have side effects that you find distressing, let your doctor know.
- Some side effects can be alleviated by changing habits. If a med causes upset stomach, try taking it with food. If it causes sleepiness, try taking it in the evening.

# WHAT MEDICATION SHOULD I TAKE?



Sleep

Insomnia ◀ ▶ Sleepiness



Weight Change

Weight Loss ◀ ▶ Weight Gain



Sexual Issues

Less Libido ◀ ▶ More Libido



Must Stop Slowly

None ▶ Withdrawal Side Effects More Likely



Upset Stomach

▶ Upset Stomach More Likely



Other Issues

## SSRIs

Citalopram	- - - - -   + + + +	- - - - -  + + + +	- - - - -  + + + +	+ + + +	+ + + +	• Can rarely cause heart rhythm changes. Tell your doctor if you have had heart problems in the past.
Escitalopram	- - - - -   + + + +	- - - - -  + + + +	- - - - -  + + + +	+ + + +	+ + + +	
Fluoxetine	- - - - -  + + + +	- - - - -  + + + +	- - - - -  + + + +	+ + + + +	+ + + +	• May interact with other drugs you are taking.
Paroxetine	- - - - -    + + + +	- - - - -  + + + +	- - - - -  + + + +	+ + + +	+ + + +	• More likely to cause constipation diarrhea or nausea.
Sertraline	- - - - -   + + + +	- - - - -  + + + +	- - - - -    + + + +	+ + + +	+ + + +	• More likely to cause diarrhea.
<b>SNRIs</b>						
Duloxetine	- - - - -   + + + +	- - - - -   + + + +	- - - - -  + + + +	+ + + +	+ + + +	• Tell doctor if you have high blood pressure.
Venlafaxine	- - - - -  + + + +	- - - - -  + + + +	- - - - -  + + + +	+ + + +	+ + + +	• More likely to cause nausea and vomiting. • Tell your doctor if you have high blood pressure.
<b>Other</b>						
Bupropion	- - - - -   + + + +	- - - - -   + + + +	- - - - -  + + + +	+ + + +	+ + + +	• Do not use if you have a history of seizures or eating disorder.
Mirtazapine	- - - - -  + + + +	- - - - -  + + + +	- - - - -  + + + +	+ + + +	+ + + +	