

**Mental Health Nursing  
Class Preparation  
Antidepressant Therapy**

**Directions:** Please fill in the blanks and answer the questions in the spaces provided.

1. What is the mechanism by which antidepressant medications achieve their desired effect (regardless of the different physiological processes by which this action is accomplished)?

They treat depression by enhancing mood

2. For what must a nurse be on the alert with a client who is receiving antidepressant medication?

That antidepressants can contribute to suicidal behavior and depressive and suicidal thoughts should be closely monitored.

3. When should a nurse expect a client to begin showing signs of symptomatic relief after the initiation of antidepressant therapy?

Around 10-14 days

4. Give an example of a tricyclic antidepressant: amitriptyline

Give an example of an MAOI: selegine

Give an example of an SSRI: sertraline

5. Describe some common side effects and nursing implications for tricyclic antidepressants.

Common side effects include anticholinergic effects (dry mouth, constipation, urine retention), orthostatic hypotension, sedation, and weight gain. Toxicity effects are cardiovascular including tachycardia, dysrhythmias, and MI. These can be lethal in OD so only giving one week supply at a time

6. hypertensive crisis is the most potentially life-threatening adverse effect of MAOIs. Symptoms for which the nurse must be on the alert include:

Initially show irritability anxiety, flushing, sweating, and fever. Followed by high fever, seizures, coma, and death

7. What must be done to prevent these symptoms from occurring?

Gastric lavage and activated charcoal to try to get rid of the medication in the body, along with hypothermic blankets, antihypertensives, and benzos