

**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 achieve their desired effect by blocking the reuptake of serotonin and norepinephrine which increased the availability in the synaptic space. _____

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

_ Nurses must be alert for suicidal behaviors. _____

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

_ Initial improvement can be seen 10-14 days but full effects can take 4-8 weeks. _____

4. Give an example of a tricyclic antidepressant:

_ Amitriptyline _____

Give an example of an MAOI:

_____ Phenzelzine _____

Give an example of an SSRI: _____ fluoxetine _____

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

_ Some common side effects for tricyclic antidepressants are anticholinergic effects, orthostatic hypotension, sedation and weight gain. Some nursing implications are that TCAs are lethal if overdosed, contraindicated in pregnant women, alcohol use, oral contraceptives, those taking MAOIs, and benzos. Toxic effects can cause dysrhythmias, tachycardia and MI _____

6. _____ Hypertensive crisis _____ is the most potentially life-threatening adverse effect of MAOIs. Symptoms for which the nurse must be on the alert include: _____ Irritability, anxiety, flushing, sweating and fever. They can be followed by seizures, a coma and death. _____

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

_____ To prevent this from happening anyone taking MAOIs should restrict their intake of tyramine, which is found in foods such as meat, aged cheese and beer. They should also avoid pseudoephedrine.
