

**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)?

Enhance mood by balancing neurotransmitters including dopamine and serotonin.

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

Suicidal ideations

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

2 weeks

4. Give an example of a tricyclic antidepressant: Amitriptyline

Give an example of an MAOI: Phenelzine

Give an example of an SSRI: Duloxetine

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

Orthostatic hypotension, sedation, and weight gain. Can be lethal in an overdose so it is important to only supply a week of medication at a time. Also important to encourage a healthy diet and encourage slow movements when changing positions.

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 and sweating. Then you will see a high fever, seizures, a coma and ultimately death.

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

Avoid foods that are high in tyramine including aged cheese, processed meats, and fermented foods including pickles and alcohol.