

**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)?

Increasing the levels of neurotransmitters like serotonin and norepinephrine in the brain by inhibiting their reuptake at the synapse

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

suicidal ideation or behaviors

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

4-6 weeks of the initiation of antidepressant therapy you will start to show symptomatic relief.

4. Give an example of a tricyclic antidepressant: Amitriptyline

Give an example of an MAOI: Isocarboxazid

Give an example of an SSRI: Fluoxetine

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

common side effects are anticholinergic effects, orthostatic hypotension, sedation and weight gain- nursing implications would be to go from sitting to standing slowly, don't drive or operate machinery while taking this medication due to sedation, and to alert the provider if any side effects are bothering you or affecting your daily living.

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

Severe high blood pressure : initially- irritability, anxiety, flushing, sweating and fever then followed by- high fever, seizures, coma and even death.

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

Must restrict their intake of tyramine to prevent severe HTN such as aged cheese, processed meats, fermented, or pickled foods and beer.