

**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 inhibit neurotransmitter reuptake therefore increasing the neurotransmitter availability in the synaptic gap. As a result, it improves mood and the area in the brain which controls emotion.

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

In the initial period of taking antidepressant medication, the nurse should monitor for suicidal thoughts.

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

In 2-4 weeks after starting antidepressant's they should exhibit signs of relief.

4. Give an example of a tricyclic antidepressant: Amitriptyline

Give an example of an MAOI: Phenelzine

Give an example of an SSRI: Fluoxetine

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

The client can exhibit anticholinergic effects such as acute dystonia, cardiac dysrhythmias, hypotension, confusion, memory loss, sedation. The nursing implications include monitoring for side effects and monitoring for side effects listed. In addition, educating the client of the side effects to report.

6. Hypertensive crisis\_ is the most potentially life-threatening adverse effect of MAOIs. Symptoms for which the nurse must be on the alert include: The symptoms the nurse should be on the alert for is severe headache, tachycardia, severe hypertension, flushing, diaphoresis, fever, restlessness.

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

Educating clients on avoiding foods containing tyramine, and not taking other antidepressants while taking MAOIs to prevent adverse effects. In addition, report signs that are indicative of change of behavior immediately.