

**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)?

Increase the availability of dopamine, serotonin, and norepinephrine.

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

Suicidal ideations at the beginning of therapy and side effects like serotonin syndrome, metabolic syndrome, and hypertensive crisis.

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

2-4 weeks.

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.

Anticholinergic Effects include dry mouth, blurred vision, urinary retention, and orthostatic hypotension. Teach slow position changes, encourage fluids for constipation, and educate to not stop abruptly.

6. Hypertensive crisis, is the most potentially life-threatening adverse effect of MAOIs. Symptoms for which the nurse must be on the alert include: Occipital headache, stiff neck, chest pain, and hypertension.

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

Avoid tyramine foods, avoid over the counter cold medications, maintain strict diet 2 weeks after stopping medication if planning to discontinue.