

**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)?** Increases serotonin (inhibits serotonin reuptake) improving depression

**2. For what must a nurse be on the alert with a client who is receiving antidepressant medication?** Serotonin syndrome & increased risk of suicide (being of tx)

**3. When should a nurse expect a client to begin showing signs of symptomatic relief after the initiation of antidepressant therapy?** 1-4 weeks (depending on med)

**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 (blurred vision, urinary retention, constipation, dry mouth,) weight gain, sedation, orthostatic hypotension. Increase fluid & fiber, report any urinary retention, stand up slowly/dangle.

**6. Hypertensive crisis is the most potentially life-threatening adverse effect of MAOIs. Symptoms for which the nurse must be on the alert include:** anxiety, flushing, diaphoresis, fever, seizures, coma, death.

**7. What must be done to prevent these symptoms from occurring?** Avoid all foods with tyramine (aged cheese, cured meats, avocado, beer, pickled food, yogurt, etc.)