

MENTAL HEALTH 101

Selection of a First Line Antidepressant Medication

Variable	Medication
Patient history	
Age group	
Children and adolescents	SSRI* (fluoxetine)
Adults < 65 yr	SSRI, NRI [^] or SNRI ^{**}
Adults ≥ 65 yr	SRI ^{^^}
Family history of response	Same medication that was effective in first-degree relative
Past response	Same medication that was effective previously
Depression characteristic	
Bipolar depression	Mood stabilizer (lithium or lamotrigine) plus antidepressant
Psychotic depression	Antidepressant plus antipsychotic (atypical)
Depression with features of obsessive-compulsive disorder	SSRI
Panic attacks	SSRI
Agitated depression	Sedating antidepressant
Depression with psychomotor retardation	Nonsedating antidepressant (NRI, SSRI)
Medication-resistant depression	Electroconvulsive therapy or combination of medications
Coexisting medical conditions	
Heart disease	Nontricyclic antidepressants
Stroke	Caution with SNRIs or NRIs and blood pressure
Pain	Duloxetine, venlafaxine
Concern regarding side effects	
Gastrointestinal symptoms	Nontricyclic antidepressant
Anticholinergic symptoms	Nontricyclic antidepressant
Sexual dysfunction	Non-SSRI antidepressant
Weight gain	Avoid atypical antipsychotics
Postural hypotension	NRI
Diabetes	Avoid atypical antipsychotics

*SSRI = selective serotonin-reuptake inhibitor
[^]NRI norepinephrine-reuptake inhibitor
^{**}SNRI = serotonin-norepinephrine reuptake inhibitor
^{^^}SRI serotonin-reuptake inhibitor.

Table adapted from: Mann, J. Drug therapy: the medical management of depression. NEJM. 2005; 353(17):1828.

IDCR-o-GRAM: HIV and Major Depression

