



Community Behavioral Health (CBH) encourages doctors to include you in decisions regarding your antidepressant medications (examples include *Prozac* and *Zoloft*). CBH encourages you to understand why you are taking medication and ensure you are comfortable taking it. Managing your own medication is a crucial and empowering step in managing your depression. Taking your medication may help reduce your depression symptoms, which will cause less disruption to your daily life. It can also help you continue to enjoy your life.

In addition to medication, it is important that you have a support system in place for managing your mental health. Therapy, Certified Peer Specialists (CPSs), and family supports are crucial components of recovery and symptom management.

What you need to know about your antidepressant medication:

- ➔ In some cases, it may take **six to eight weeks** for medication to significantly decrease symptoms.
- ➔ If you have any questions about the medication, **contact your doctor or pharmacist.**
- ➔ If medication is not effective after this time, **contact your doctor.**
- ➔ Your medication may require **dose increases** to be fully effective.
- ➔ Always **talk to your doctor** before discontinuing a medication.

Antidepressant Medications are prescribed to manage daily symptoms of depression and prevent future episodes of depression. It is important to know why you are being prescribed an antidepressant medication. **Ask your doctor** the following questions:

- ➔ **Why** am I being prescribed this medication?
- ➔ **What** should I do if I miss a dose?
- ➔ **How** will this medication help me?
- ➔ **What** side effects can I expect with this medication?
- ➔ **How** should I store this medication?
- ➔ If I am unable to swallow the pill, **can I crush** this medication?
- ➔ **How long** will it take this medication to help me?
- ➔ **What time of day** should I take this medication?
- ➔ **How** will I know if this medication is working?





Ways to remember to take your medication:



Set a reminder for your medication refill.



Keep medications **next to your bed** if taken after waking or before bed.



Ask for help. Have a friend or family member remind you about your medication.



Ask your pharmacist about unit dose packaging to make it easier to remember taking your medication.



Keep a list of your medications, including notes on how and when to take them, and a schedule or chart.



Use an app on your phone, like *Mango Health* or *Medisafe*, to send notification reminders for taking your medication.



Set alarms for the times you need to take your medication.

Concerns when taking your antidepressant medication

Ways to manage your concerns

I do not feel better after taking this medicine for several weeks, so I want to stop taking my antidepressant.

Antidepressant medications usually need to be taken regularly for more than a month before you feel better. It can be harmful to stop your medication before talking to your doctor.

I don't like the way this antidepressant makes me feel.

Talk to your doctor about any side effects you are experiencing while taking your antidepressant.

I do not have access to transportation to get my medications from the pharmacy.

Contact your pharmacy or health plan (e.g., Keystone First, Aetna) about home delivery options.

I have a busy life, and sometimes forget to take my medication.

Taking your medication immediately following another part of your daily routine can help you remember to take your medication. Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about when would be the best time to fit your medication into your routine.

I do not want my family members to know I am taking medication for depression.

You have the right to keep your medication history private. Talk to your pharmacist about discrete pills containers that do not show your personal information. If you get medication delivery, talk to your pharmacy about using discrete packaging.

I don't feel sick, so why should I keep taking my antidepressant?

Even if you no longer feel depressed, it is important to continue taking your antidepressant medication as prescribed so symptoms do not return or worsen.

Taking this antidepressant is making me feel worse.

If your depression symptoms worsen or you experience suicidal thoughts or behaviors, contact your doctor right away.

