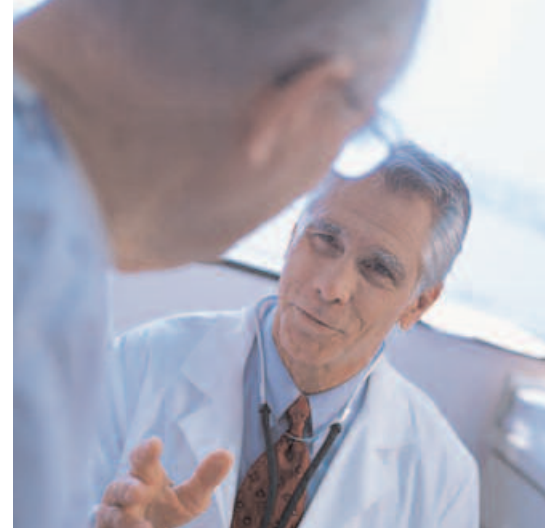


# Persons Considering Medication Treatment for Depression



**It is very important that you continue to take the medication exactly as prescribed — even if you feel better!**

## Quick Facts About Antidepressant Medications

- Antidepressant medications work by helping correct an imbalance of chemicals in the brain.
- Antidepressant medications are not addictive nor habit forming; they are not uppers and they are not tranquilizers.

## Treating Depression With Antidepressant Medications

There are many types of antidepressant medications available. Your primary care physician will consider several factors when selecting which type is appropriate for you.

- Most people respond well to medication.
- Some antidepressant medications are started at low doses to allow your body time to adapt.
- Your primary care physician will then gradually increase the dose until you begin to feel better.
- After about three to six weeks of taking antidepressant medications, most people with depression begin to feel more like their usual self.

It may take time for you and your primary care physician to find the medication that works best for you; sometimes this requires trying more than one medication. **It is very important** that you continue to take the medication exactly as your primary care physician prescribed — even if you feel better!

**For the first six to eight weeks after you begin treatment**, your primary care physician will want to see you often to check:

- How much medication you take.
- How often you take the medication.
- Side effects you may experience.
- Effect of the medication (how well it is working).

After your depression is significantly improved, you will continue taking the medication for an additional four to nine months to prevent your depression from returning. **Note:** People who have had two or more previous episodes of depression may need to continue taking their medication for longer periods of time.

## What Can You Do To Help Your Primary Care Physician Treat Your Depression?

- Keep all of your appointments.
- Ask your primary care physician about any questions or concerns you have about the medication.
- Take the medication exactly as your primary care physician prescribes.
- Tell your primary care physician immediately about any side effects you may have.
- Tell your primary care physician how the medication is working (for example, whether you are feeling better or worse).

*Adapted from Rost K. Depression Tool Kit for Primary Care NIMH grant MH54444.*

Aetna is the brand name used for products and services provided by one or more of the Aetna group of subsidiary companies. The Aetna companies that offer, underwrite or administer benefits coverage include Aetna Health Inc., Aetna Life Insurance Company, Corporate Health Insurance Company, Aetna Health Administrators, LLC and Aetna Health Management, LLC.

This information is provided for informational purposes only and is not intended to direct treatment decisions or offer medical advice. Aetna does not provide health care services and cannot guarantee any results or outcomes. All patient care and related decisions are the sole responsibility of the treating provider.

We want you to know<sup>SM</sup>



[www.aetna.com](http://www.aetna.com)