



# **FDA APPROVED TREATMENTS FOR DEPRESSION & BIPOLAR DISORDER IN PEDIATRICS**

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# COMPARISON BETWEEN DEPRESSION & BIPOLAR DISORDER

## DEPRESSION:

- Feeling sad or empty most of the day
- Loss of interest in activities you used to enjoy
- Fatigue or lack of energy
- Difficulty concentrating or making decisions
- Changes in sleep (sleeping too much or too little)
- Changes in appetite or weight
- Feelings of worthlessness or excessive guilt
- Thoughts of death or suicide

## BIPOLAR DISORDER:

- Bipolar disorder is a mental health condition with extreme mood swings, which include emotional highs (mania or hypomania) and lows (depression). Bipolar I involves at least one manic episode vs. Bipolar II involves at least one hypomanic or depressive episode.

### Manic Episode:

- Feeling extremely energetic, high, or euphoric
- Rapid speech and racing thoughts
- Reduced need for sleep
- Overconfidence or grandiosity
- Engaging in risky behaviors (spending sprees, unsafe sex)

### Depressive Episode:

- Feeling sad or hopeless
- Loss of interest in activities
- Fatigue and low energy
- Difficulty concentrating

# FDA TREATMENTS FOR DEPRESSION

- **Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors (SSRIs):** These are the most commonly used antidepressants. They work by increasing the level of serotonin, a chemical in the brain that helps improve mood. Some FDA-approved SSRIs for use in young people include:
  - **Fluoxetine (Prozac):** Approved for use in children ages 8 and older for depression.
  - **Escitalopram (Lexapro):** Approved for children and adolescents aged 12-17 years for depression.
  - **Sertraline (Zoloft):** Approved for children and adolescents aged 6-17 years for depression.
  - These medications may take 1-2 weeks to start working and 4-6 weeks for full effect. Side effects can include nausea, changes in appetite, sleep problems, or headaches. There is a small risk of increased suicidal thoughts or behavior when starting antidepressants, especially in children and adolescents. Monitor how you feel and communicate openly with your family or healthcare provider.
- **OTHER MEDICATIONS:**
  - **Bupropion (Wellbutrin):** Approved for use in adults, but sometimes used in adolescents for depression if other medications are not effective or well-tolerated. It helps by increasing the levels of norepinephrine and dopamine in the brain.
  - **Mirtazapine (Remeron):** Sometimes prescribed for depression in adolescents, especially if they have trouble sleeping or low appetite. It helps by balancing certain neurotransmitters in the brain.

# APPROVED PSYCHOTHERAPY FOR DEPRESSION:

## Psychotherapy (Talk Therapy)

- . **Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT):** This is a type of therapy that helps individuals recognize and change negative thinking patterns and behaviors. CBT is often used in combination with medication for the most effective treatment of depression.
- . **Interpersonal Therapy (IPT):** This therapy focuses on improving relationships and addressing interpersonal issues that may contribute to depression.

# FDA TREATMENTS FOR BIPOLAR DISORDER

- **Mood Stabilizers:** These help prevent mood swings (from depression to mania or hypomania).
  - **Lithium:** This is one of the most common medications for bipolar disorder. It helps prevent both manic and depressive episodes, but it requires regular blood tests to make sure the levels are safe.
  - **Valproate (Depakote):** This is another mood stabilizer that is used to treat mania in young people. It's often used when lithium is not effective or suitable.
- **Atypical Antipsychotics:** These medications help control manic or mixed episodes and sometimes depressive episodes.
  - **Aripiprazole (Abilify):** Approved for treating manic or mixed episodes in children 10 years and older.
  - **Risperidone (Risperdal):** Approved for treating manic episodes in children 10 years and older.
  - **Quetiapine (Seroquel):** Approved for use in adolescents aged 10-17 years for bipolar disorder.
  - **Olanzapine (Zyprexa):** Approved for use in young people aged 13 and older for bipolar disorder.
- **Antidepressants:** Sometimes, doctors prescribe antidepressants along with mood stabilizers or antipsychotics to treat depression in bipolar disorder. However, these are used with caution since they can sometimes trigger a manic episode if not paired with a mood stabilizer.

# APPROVED PSYCHOTHERAPY FOR BIPOLAR DISORDER

- **Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT):** As with depression, CBT is helpful in teaching young people with bipolar disorder how to manage their thoughts, behaviors, and emotions.
- **Family-Focused Therapy:** This type of therapy involves family members in the treatment process to improve communication, reduce stress, and build a supportive home environment.
- **Interpersonal and Social Rhythm Therapy (IPSRT):** This therapy focuses on improving daily routines and sleep patterns, which are crucial for preventing mood swings in bipolar disorder.

# KEY TAKEAWAYS FOR DEPRESSION & BIPOLAR DISORDER TREATMENT

1. **Treatment Plans:** Depression and bipolar disorder are treatable with the right combination of medication and therapy. It's important to stick to the treatment plan and work closely with your healthcare provider.
2. **Communication:** Open communication with your doctor, family, and friends is critical. If any side effects or new symptoms appear, talk to your doctor right away.
3. **Monitor Mood and Behavior:** Regular check-ins with your doctor are important, as they can monitor progress and adjust treatment if needed.
4. **Support:** Therapy can be just as important as medication. Finding a therapist and involving family in the process can make a big difference in recovery.

Treating depression and bipolar disorder is a process, but with the right tools, young people can manage their symptoms and lead happy, fulfilling lives. Always remember that the goal is to find the right balance of medication, therapy, and support that works for each individual.