



## **Antidepressants:**

Some of the most common treatments for  
Depression and Anxiety

Eli Sugarman, Javier Covas, and Amaka Imoh  
Ross University School of Medicine

# FDA APPROVAL OF ANTIDEPRESSANTS

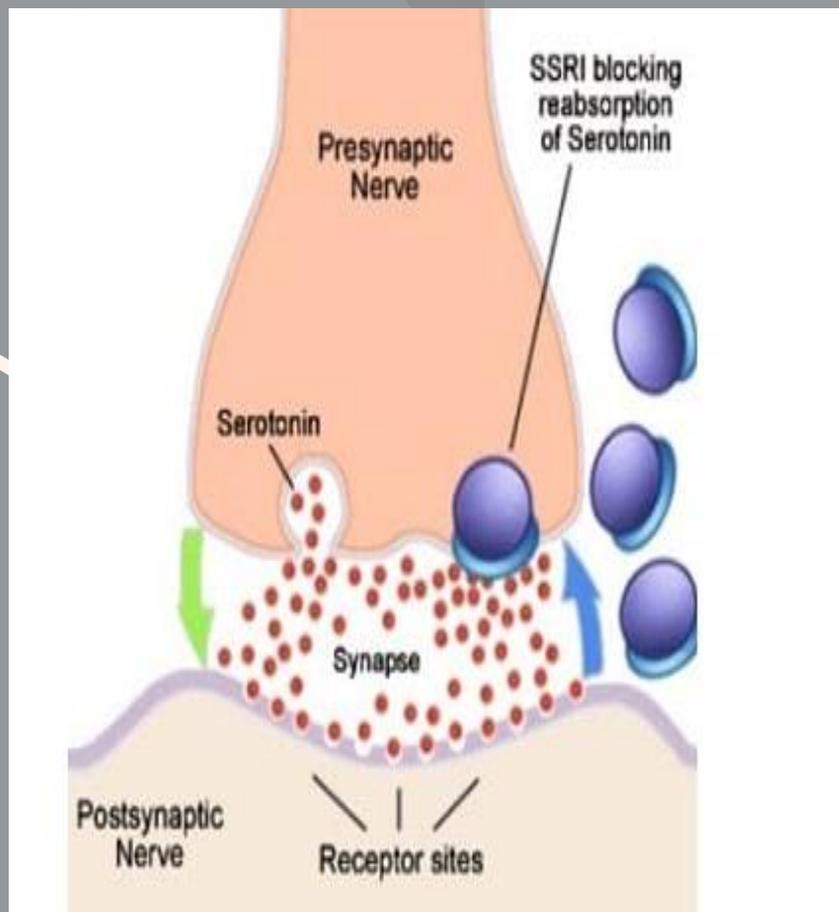
- The FDA has approved several classes of antidepressants – the most common being:
  - Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors (SSRIs)
  - Serotonin and Norepinephrine Reuptake Inhibitors (SNRIs)
  - Tricyclic and Tetracyclic Antidepressants (TCAs)
  - Monoamine Oxidase Inhibitors (MAOIs)
- Other classes include:
  - NMDA Antagonists
  - Atypical antidepressants
    - e.g. Trazadone, Mirtazapine, Bupropion

# SSRIs

( Serotonin Selective Reuptake Inhibitors)

Common medicine names include:

Lexapro, Zoloft, Paxil, Prozac



<https://www.simplypsychology.org/major-classes-of-antidepressants.html>

- These medicines work by increasing the amount of serotonin available to the body.
- Serotonin is an important factor in the regulation of mood and behavior
- Having more available serotonin is how these medicines improve anxiety and depression

# SNRIs

(Serotonin Norepinephrine Reuptake Inhibitors)  
Common medicine names include:  
Effexor, Cymbalta , Pristiq



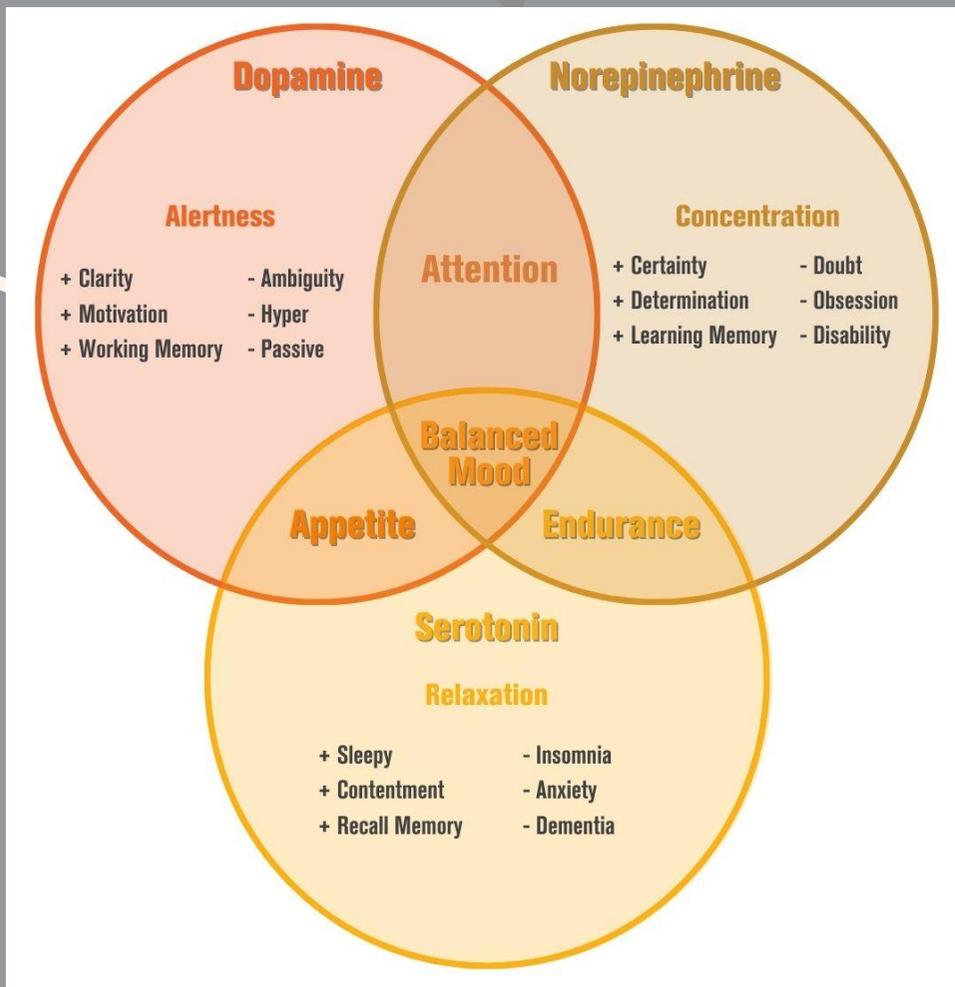
<https://www.buzzrx.com/blog/whats-the-difference-between-an-ssri-vs-snri>

- SNRIs are similar to SSRIs, but also increase norepinephrine available
- Norepinephrine is another molecule that regulates behavior and activity.
- This gives a different approach to aiding people with anxiety, depression, and loss of focus

# Tricyclic antidepressants

Common medicine names include:  
Silenor, Asendin, Elavil

- A treatment that makes multiple molecules more available to the body.
- The medicine has a range of effects in the body that can help with many issues.
- The effects are very helpful, but do also carry a wider number of side effects



# MAOIs

( Monoamine Oxidase Inhibitors)

Common medicine names include:  
Emsam, Nardil

## How Do MAOI Drugs Work?

MAOIs stop the effect of monoamine oxidase — an enzyme that changes the levels of neurotransmitters norepinephrine, serotonin, and dopamine in the brain.



Mango Clinic  
Powered by MED

<https://mangoclinic.com/maoi-drugs-for-depression-how-do-they-work/>

- MAOIs block the breakdown of the molecules discussed before.
- It is another way to make sure more of these important factors are around for the body to use properly

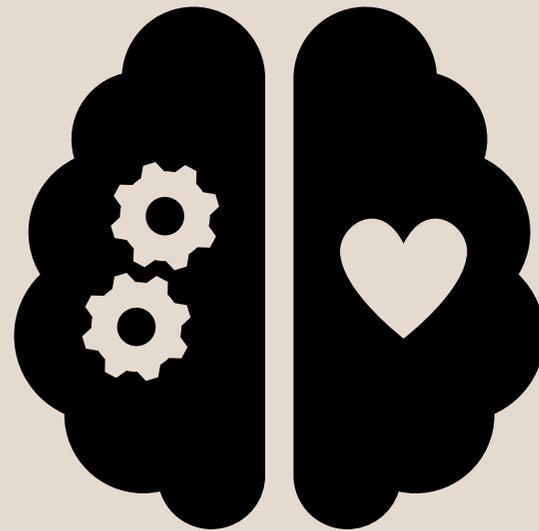
# So...Antidepressants

## What are they?

- Medications that help balance brain chemicals to improve mood.

## Main Benefits:

- Reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety.
- Improve sleep and energy levels.
- Help people feel more emotionally stable.
- Lower risk of severe depression episodes.



# What are they used for?

- Antidepressants can be used to treat more than depression!
- Alternative illnesses they can treat:
  - Anxiety disorders
  - Panic disorder
  - Eating disorders
  - Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
  - Personality disorders
  - ...and many more!

# WHAT TO KNOW BEFORE TAKING ANTIDEPRESSANTS

## Possible side effects:

- Nausea, headache, dizziness
- Changes in sleep or appetite
- Reduced sex drive

## Serious but rare risks:

- Increased anxiety at the start
- Withdrawal symptoms if stopped suddenly
- In rare cases, suicidal thoughts (especially in young people).

# STIGMA AROUND ANTIDEPRESSANTS

Does taking antidepressants make me look weak or crazy?

- NO!
- Taking antidepressants is one of many ways to protect and better your mental well-being.
- Taking care of your mental health is as important as your physical health!

Will I get addicted to my antidepressants?

- NO!
- Antidepressants have not proven to be addictive in multiple studies done over time by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and other relevant medical bodies.

Will antidepressants change my personality?

- NO!
- While antidepressants are intended to lift your mood and assist in managing your emotional well-being, you will not suddenly lose the characteristics that make you, you.
- If anything, antidepressants may help you bring out more of your personality!

# ANTIDEPRESSANT CONSIDERATIONS

- Always talk to your doctor if you are pregnant or may become pregnant, as this is important to discuss before starting a new medication!
- If you are experiencing side effects, discuss them with your doctor first, and **DO NOT** stop taking antidepressant medications on your own!
- Make sure to tell your doctor about all the other medications and supplements you are taking. This is very important to limit negative interactions from conflicting medications!