

Depression is a very common condition and your doctor has decided to treat you with antidepressant medication as part of your treatment plan. It is important to take your **medications exactly as prescribed** and to **follow-up with your doctor as scheduled**. Your doctor will need to monitor your response to treatment. This follow-up will allow your treatment team to better understand how you are feeling and to allow your doctor to better manage your care.

IMPORTANT ISSUES TO BE AWARE OF...

- Depression may only last for a short time, but can last for longer periods of time.
- Antidepressants take time to work, so don't be worried if the medication doesn't seem to be working immediately.
- It is important to let your doctor know how you are feeling so they can make adjustments in your medication if needed.
- Not everyone responds in the same way and your doctor may need to try more than one medication to find out what works best for you.
- Medications take time to work and it is important to continue them even when you are feeling better. The medication may be what is helping you feel better, and stopping could result in a return of the depression. Your doctor can tell you when to safely stop your medication after you finished the appropriate treatment.
- If you need to stop your medication for any reason, discuss it with your doctor first to avoid any potential for harm.
- Even if you take your medication, it is important to see your doctor regularly to monitor your situation, discuss your progress and make any adjustments

IMPORTANT THINGS YOU CAN DO TO MANAGE YOUR HEALTH...

1. Ask your doctor questions.

- *What is my diagnosis and what does it mean?*
- *How will I be treated?*
- *How long will I need to stay on the medications?*
- *What side effects or medication interactions might I need to watch out for?*
- *What should I do if I have any problems with my medication?*

2. Keep your doctor appointments.

3. Take your medications as directed — don't decide to stop without talking to your doctor.

It is unsafe to stop medications on your own.

4. Discuss expectations.

You are partners with your doctor's office in your health care. Make sure you understand the issues around your care and your doctor considers your input.

5. Be sure to get your medications.

Let your doctor know if you have any issues in getting your medications—whether because of insurance coverage, cost, or other reasons. Your doctor's office should be able to help.

6. And don't hesitate to contact your doctor if you have any questions or concerns!