

# Depression Medicine: Deciding to Quit

Lots of people treat their depression with medicine.

They stay on the medicines as prescribed for as long as their doctors and therapists tell them to and they decide if the medicines are working well.

But what if you're ready to stop taking them?

You know yourself best, but it's important to know your reasons for quitting. And to learn the best way to stop.

Start by talking with your doctor and therapist to find out if that's the right decision for you.

Here's why: quitting antidepressants too quickly can cause withdrawal symptoms.

It can also cause depression to come back.

Now, the best reason to stop taking depression medicine is if you feel better and you and your doctor believe that you'll keep feeling better after you stop.

Your doctor will slowly reduce the dose over a span of a few weeks or months.

But if you're new to antidepressants and they have been working well for you, your doctor may suggest taking them for at least 6 months after you feel better.

This may help keep you from getting depressed again.

Another reason some people want to stop taking depression medicines is that they feel like the medicines aren't working.

They still have depression symptoms such as feeling sad, hopeless, or losing interest in or not getting pleasure from the things that they used to enjoy.

They may find it hard to focus, remember things, or make decisions.

If you feel like your medicines aren't working, this is something to talk about with your doctor.

You may need a different dose.

Or you may need to try different medicines.

It can take a while to find the medicine and dosage that work best for you.

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And you may want to add counseling.

Sometimes a combination of antidepressants and counseling may work better than if only one of these treatments is used.

You may also want to quit your medicines because of side effects.

This happens, especially when you first start taking the medicine.

But most side effects can be managed, or you can work with your doctor to change the dose or type of medicine you take.

Sometimes it's a question of money.

Many people feel that they can't afford the medicine, so they quit.

But often there are lower cost, generic medicines available, so your doctor may be able to prescribe one for you that costs a lot less.

Your doctor can also connect you with organizations that help people pay for their medicine.

There are a lot of reasons you may want to stop taking your medicines.

But it's important to talk with your doctor first about why you want to stop in order to do it safely.