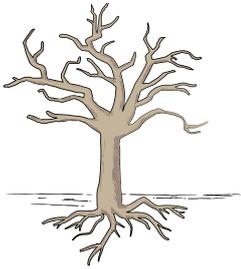


# Medicines for depression



Many things keep you strong – your spirit, your family, your elders, your community and your country.

Depression is an illness that can stop you feeling strong inside.

Some people with depression will need medicines to help them cope.

This fact sheet explains **medicines for depression** and how to use them. You can give this to your family if you want to.

## Ways to heal

There are many things you can do to help depression.



Get good sleep



Get support from your family, community and culture



Yarn with a counsellor or health worker at the clinic



Be active every day



Stop smoking, cut back on alcohol and other drugs



Medicines



Eat good tucker

## Medicines can help you heal

Some people need medicines to help them feel better. These are called **antidepressants**. Medicines can help build your spirit so you can be strong again.

Depression is common. There is no shame to take medicines if the doctor thinks they will help.

Different medicines work better for different people. It might take a while to find the right one for you.

### Find out more

- ▶ [nps.org.au/depression](http://nps.org.au/depression)
- ▶ [beyondblue.org.au](http://beyondblue.org.au) or call **1300 224 636**
- ▶ [headspace.org.au/yarn-safe](http://headspace.org.au/yarn-safe) or call **1800 650 890**
- ▶ iBobbly social and emotional wellbeing app [blackdoginstitute.org.au/resources-support/digital-tools-apps/ibobbly/](http://blackdoginstitute.org.au/resources-support/digital-tools-apps/ibobbly/)

### Tell someone straight away if you think about hurting yourself.

- ▶ **13YARN (13 92 76)**
- ▶ Lifeline **13 11 14** or text **0477 131 114**
- ▶ Suicide Call Back Service **1300 659 467**
- ▶ Kids Helpline **1800 55 1800**

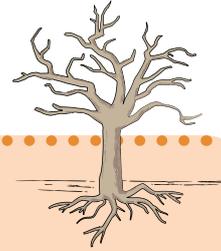
Or call the clinic or your support person on

**If your life or that of a loved one is in danger, call 000**

## Things to know when you're taking medicines for depression

### The medicines take time to work

- ▶ It might be 2 to 4 weeks before you start to feel better.
- ▶ Keep taking your medicines every day until they start to work.



### It takes time to heal

- ▶ Feeling strong again takes time.
- ▶ Take your medicine for at least 6 months, or longer as agreed with your doctor.
- ▶ If you stop taking your medicine too early the depression can return.

### Talk to your doctor before stopping

- ▶ You may feel very sick if you stop taking your medicine suddenly.
- ▶ Make sure you talk to your doctor or health worker before stopping or taking less.

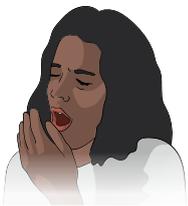


## Medicine side effects

You may notice some changes, called side effects, in your body after you start your medicine.

You may not get any side effects, or you may only get 1 or 2. Many side effects will go away or get better after 1 or 2 weeks. But you may even feel a bit worse before you start feeling better.

Side effects can be things like:



Feeling sleepy



Headache



Problems with sex



Trouble sleeping

Talk to your doctor or health worker, or go back to the clinic, if the side effects last more than 2 weeks or trouble you.

**Go back to the clinic straight away if you feel much worse or think about hurting yourself after starting your medicine.**

**Using alcohol and other drugs (like cannabis or ice) can make side effects worse. Ask your health worker for help with cutting back on alcohol and other drugs.**



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