

My Antidepressant Deprescribing Plan

There are many reasons why someone might want to stop taking their antidepressant. If you have been thinking about this, speak with your health professional first. They will help you understand if stopping is the right choice.

I'm thinking about stopping my antidepressant because:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> My mental health has improved | <input type="checkbox"/> My situation has changed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I don't think the medicine is helping | <input type="checkbox"/> The antidepressant is causing unpleasant side effects |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I no longer want to take a medicine | <input type="checkbox"/> My reason for stopping is: |



Do not stop taking your medicine suddenly. Always speak with your doctor or pharmacist first.

What's involved in stopping an antidepressant?



Planning

- Most people can stop taking their antidepressant by slowly lowering the dose. This process is known as 'tapering'.
- A slow taper can take weeks to many months. This helps to lower the chance of symptoms and make withdrawal more manageable.
- Your doctor will give you instructions about how and when to lower your dose, and when it is OK to stop.
- Some people may only be able to lower their dose, not stop completely.
- Before cutting tablets or opening capsules, talk with your doctor or pharmacist so they can help you to safely lower your antidepressant dose.
- If tapering causes problems, it is important to talk to your doctor or pharmacist about how you are feeling. Your health professional may suggest you need to slow the tapering, pause it, or return to your previous dose for symptom relief before trying to taper again more slowly.

What withdrawal symptoms might happen to me?

Withdrawal symptoms can happen as you lower your antidepressant dose. Often they will be mild and tend to go away quickly. Some people may find their symptoms are more severe. You may experience:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• anxiety or irritability• difficulty concentrating• dizziness or lightheadedness• shock like sensations / zaps | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• flu-like symptoms• insomnia and vivid dreams• nausea and sometimes vomiting• suicidal or negative thoughts |
|--|---|



Withdrawal symptoms can vary from person to person. Often, they may feel like symptoms of depression or anxiety, such as worsened mood, anxiety, irritability and panic. If you are worried about any symptoms speak to your health professional. They can guide you on how best to manage these symptoms.

Ask if there are any symptoms that need urgent care and where to go for help.

Taking care while tapering

Name: _____

Date: _____

Prepared by: _____

When you start tapering it is important to:

Check how you are feeling



- You may need to see your doctor more often while you taper.
- Regular checks can help catch any issues early.
- Between visits, write down how you feel. Do you have any new symptoms? How are you coping with your other health conditions? Bring this information to your next doctor's appointment so you can talk about what is going on.

Symptoms or other things that are causing me worry:

Find ways to support your mental health

Making changes in your daily life, building social connections and psychological treatments can help support your mental health. Talk to your health professionals about options to try such as:

- Be active
- Eat well
- Join local community or social groups
- Do things you enjoy
- Spend time with trusted family or friends
- Try measures to improve sleep
- Practice relaxation techniques
- Try an online mental health program
- See a mental health professional



For more ideas, resources and support services, visit [Head to Health](#)

Other ways I can look after my mental health:

Know when you need help

- It can be worrying to change a medicine that has been helpful.
- Ask your doctor if there are any symptoms that need urgent care and where to go for help.
- Be aware if your mood is changing and speak to your doctor if you are worried.
- Distract yourself with activities you can do.
- Connect with trusted friends or family.
- Remember things that make you feel strong.



Symptoms that mean I need urgent care

If you are having thoughts of harming yourself or others, work together with your health professional to create a safety plan.

- Know your warning signs, so you can act early.
- Make your environment safe by removing harmful items.



Lifeline 13 11 14 or text 0477 131 114
Suicide callback service 1300 659 467

**CALL
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**FOR IMMEDIATE ASSISTANCE
OR IN AN EMERGENCY**



Quality Use of Medicines Alliance



Medcast



QUM
connect



Arthritis
AUSTRALIA



Helping consumers and health professionals make safe and wise decisions about medicines and diagnostics.
Funded by the Australian Government through the Quality Use of Diagnostics, Therapeutics and Pathology Program.