

Antidepressants: relative frequency of adverse effects

The following table gives a guide of the *relative* frequency of adverse effects that may occur with antidepressants. It is not intended to provide a complete list of all adverse effects—for comprehensive information refer to the individual drug monographs. The information has been developed from the published literature and expert advice.

Drug	Anticholinergic effects	Sedation	Orthostatic hypotension	Sexual dysfunction	Weight gain	Insomnia	GI effects ¹	QT interval prolongation
SSRIs								
Citalopram	-	- to +	-	+++	- to +	++	++	+
Escitalopram	-	- to +	-	++	- to +	++	++	+
Fluoxetine	-	-	-	+++	- to +	++	++	+
Fluvoxamine	-	- to +	-	+++	- to +	++	+++	- to +
Paroxetine	+	+	-	+++	+	++	++	- to +
Sertraline	-	-	-	+++	- to +	++	+++	- to +
Tricyclic antidepressants								
Amitriptyline	+++	+++	+++	++	+++	-	- to +	+++
Clomipramine	++	++	+++	+++	+++	- to +	- to +	+++
Dosulepin	++	+++	+++	++	+++	+	+	+++
Doxepin	+++	+++	++	++	+++	-	-	+++
Imipramine	+++	++	+++	++	+++	+	- to +	+++
Nortriptyline	+	+	++	++	+	-	-	+++
Trimipramine	++	+++	+++	++	+++	- to +	-	+++
Tricyclic related antidepressants								
Maprotiline	+	++	+	?	+	-	-	++
MAOIs								
Phenelzine	+	+	+	+++	++	- to +	+	-
Tranylcypromine	+	-	+	+++	+	- to +	+	-
Moclobemide	-	-	-	+	-	++	++	+
Others								
Mirtazapine	+	+++	- to +	+	+++	+	+	+
Reboxetine	+	- to +	-	+	?	+++	+	-
Venlafaxine	- to +	- to +	-	+++	-	++	+++	+
Bupropion	-	-	-	-	-	+	- to +	+

Approximate relative frequencies of adverse effects:

+++ Relatively common

++ Moderate

+ Low

- Absent or rare

? No information available

¹Gastrointestinal adverse effects may include anorexia, abdominal discomfort, diarrhoea and/or nausea (with SSRIs nausea is usually mild and transient).

For anticholinergic gastrointestinal adverse effects refer to anticholinergic column.