

Two minute overview of antidepressants

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The most commonly used antidepressants are the SSRIs (selective serotonin re-uptake inhibitors), venlafaxine and mirtazapine. These antidepressants are generally the first line agents. This is mainly because of their lower side effect profile and safety in overdose.

TCAs are dangerous in overdose, with severe anticholinergic effects, confusion, and significant cardiac toxicity with tachycardia and conduction abnormalities. However you may still find older patients or resistant patients on these medications. They are also used commonly as an adjunct for chronic pain conditions.

MAOI are more rarely prescribed due to stringent dietary restrictions (anything with tyramine – “the good stuff” such as wine, chocolate and cheese). Usually they are prescribed in patients with severe depression where other antidepressants have been used unsuccessfully. Although RIMAs are much better tolerated, they are not usually first line therapy and have been found to be relatively less effective as antidepressants.

Antidepressants and their trade names available in Australia:

- **Selective Serotonin Re-uptake Inhibitors (SSRI)**
 - [fluoxetine](#) (Prozac, Auscap, Fluohexal, Fluoxebell, Lovan, Zactin)
 - [paroxetine](#) (Aropax, Oxetine, Paxtine)
 - [citalopram](#) (Cipramil, Celapram, Ciazil, Talam, Talohexal)
 - [sertraline](#) (Zoloft, Concorz, Eleva, Xydep)
 - [fluvoxamine](#) (Luvox, Faverin, Movox, Voxam)
 - [escitalopram](#) (Lexapro)
- **Serotonin Noradrenalin Re-uptake Inhibitors (SNRI)**
 - [venlafaxine](#) (Efexor)
- **Tetracyclic piperazinoazepine analogue of mianserin**
 - [mirtazapine](#) (Avanza, Axit, Mirtazon, Remeron)
- **Selective noradrenaline re-uptake inhibitor (NRI)**
 - [reboxetine](#) (Edronax)
- **Tricyclic antidepressants (TCA)**
 - [amitriptyline](#) (Endep, Tryptanol)
 - [nortriptyline](#) (Allegron)
 - [clomipramine](#) (Anafranil, Placil)
 - [doxepin](#) (Deptran, Sinequan)
 - [dothiepin](#) (Prothiaden, Dothep)
 - [trimipramine](#) (Surmontil)
 - [imipramine](#) (Tofranil)
- **Reversible inhibitor of monoamine oxidase type A (RIMA)**
 - [moclobemide](#) (Aurorix, Arima, Clobemix, Maosig, Mohexal)
- **Monoamine Oxidase Inhibitors (MAOI)**
 - [phenelzine](#) (Nardil)
 - [tranylcypromine](#) (Parnate)



Happy pills...