

## Focus on the Facts: Medication Treatment Guidelines

Treating depression with medication can feel like an exercise in trial-and-error, especially when a patient experiences difficulties with side effects, or complains that their pills are simply “not working.” Below are the Medication Dosing Guidelines for treatment using one medication only. Please remember that, in general, a solid therapeutic trial involves using MORE than the minimum dose for at least 8 weeks at that dose.

Type/ Class:	Medication:	Low: Dose:	Minimum: Dose:	Common(adequate) Dose:	Maximum Dose:	Recommended Administration Schedule:
SSRI	citalopram (Celexa)	<20 mg	20 mg	40 mg	60 mg	QAM
	escitalopram (Lexapro)	<10	10 mg	20 mg	30 mg	QAM
	paroxetine (Paxil)	<20	20 mg	40 mg	60 mg	QAM
	fluoxetine (Prozac)	<20	20 mg	40 mg	60-80 mg	QAM
	sertraline (Zoloft)	<50	50 mg	100-100 mg	150 mg	QAM
TCA	nortriptyline (Pamelor)	<50	50 mg	100 mg	150 mg	QHS *(100-150 ng/L blood blood level)
	desipramine (Norpramin)	<150	50 mg	225 mg	300 mg	QHS
Others	bupropion SR (Wellbutrin SR)	<300	300 mg	400 mg	400 mg	BID $\leq$ 200mg
	(Wellbutrin XL)	<300	300 mg	450 mg	450 mg	QD
	venlafaxine XR (Effexor XR)	<75	75-150 mg	225 mg	300-375 mg	QAM (some prefer BID)
	mirtazapine (Remeron)	<15	15 mg	30 mg	45 mg	QHS
	duloxetine (Cymbalta)	<20	30 mg	60 mg	90 mg	qd-bid
For sleep	trazodone (Desyrel)	<25	50 mg	100 mg	150 mg	*most need at least 50 mg

Showing this table to your patients may help them understand their own treatment, and motivate them to comply with their dose even when experiencing adverse side effects.