

APPENDIX A:
PATIENT EDUCATION

**DOCTORS PLEASE FEEL FREE TO PHOTOCOPY
THIS MEMBER-TARGETED MATERIAL AND SHARE
WITH YOUR PATIENTS.**

DEPRESSION IS TREATABLE

Antidepressant Medication: What You Need to Know

- It is not addictive or “habit-forming.”
- It is safe for you to take according to your doctor’s orders.
- It is designed to help improve your:
 - Mood.
 - Appetite.
 - Sleep.
 - Concentration.
 - Energy.
- It is not an “upper” and will not produce a “high.”

Depression Treatment: What You Need to Know

1. Your medication must be taken every day (unless otherwise prescribed by your doctor) in order for it to work.
2. The first week on medication is often the hardest. Some people feel mild side effects before they feel the medicine begin to work. Try to stick with it. The side effects often go away or lessen in a few days and the medicine should work soon.
3. It may take up to four weeks of taking the medicine before you begin to feel better.
4. Do not stop taking your medicine without talking to your doctor.
5. Make your first follow-up appointment with your prescribing doctor within two to four weeks.
6. It is generally recommended that people stay on this medication for at least six months. Your doctor will help you decide how long to stay on the medicine.
7. Even when you feel better, it is important to continue taking the medication as prescribed.
8. Combining talk therapy with medication is often highly effective in treating depression.

Keys to Effective Treatment

- Keep all appointments.
- Take the medicine as prescribed.
- Ask your physician or therapist any questions you have about the medication or treatment.

GENERALIZED ANXIETY DISORDER

What You Need to Know

1. Generalized anxiety disorder (GAD) is common, affecting millions of people.
2. Consider learning/practicing relaxation or meditation techniques to decrease anxiety.
3. Try to get regular exercise and adequate sleep at night.
4. Decrease caffeine and alcohol/substance use.
5. Effective medication and psychotherapy are available to treat GAD.
6. In addition to treatment for anxiety, you may also seek counseling for a specific problem such as marital, family or career issues.

TAKING YOUR MEDICATION FOR ANXIETY

What You Need to Know

1. Take your medication as prescribed.
2. It may take up to four weeks of continuous medication use before experiencing any symptom relief.
3. Make a follow-up appointment to review medication within two to four weeks.
4. Do not stop taking the medication without discussing this with your doctor.
5. The medication is not generally “life-long,” but in most cases it should be taken for at least six months, even after symptoms have improved.

OBSESSIVE COMPULSIVE DISORDER

What You Need to Know

1. You are not alone; obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) affects millions of people.
2. OCD does not mean that you are “going crazy” or will “go crazy.” Instead, it means that you are experiencing a type of anxiety.
3. Studies suggest that OCD has a strong biological component, probably involving a part of the brain called the striatum.
4. There are highly effective medications and psychotherapy available to treat OCD.

PANIC DISORDER

What You Need to Know

1. Panic disorder is very real.
2. Effective medication and psychotherapy treatments are available.
3. Panic attacks are common, affecting millions of people.
4. While the exact cause is unclear, there may be a connection between panic disorder and genetics, biology and major life transitions.
5. The physical sensations you feel during a panic attack are very real and are related to the body's "fight or flight" response. While this feeling is uncomfortable, it is not life threatening.
6. Anxiety can be very powerful and become very intense very quickly. The good news is that your body cannot maintain that level of arousal. No matter what you do, given time, your body will return to its normal functioning. You should try to "ride out" the anxiety and remind yourself that the anxiety will pass.

POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER (PTSD)

What You Need to Know

1. The symptoms you are experiencing are common in response to having been through a traumatic event. The symptoms do not mean you are “going crazy.”
2. Discussing the traumatic event in a safe environment can help to decrease symptoms.
3. Symptoms of PTSD are common following traumatic events.
4. There are effective psychotherapies and medication that can improve the symptoms you are experiencing.
5. It is very important to avoid any type of substance abuse, as alcohol and other drugs complicate PTSD and can quickly develop into a very serious problem.

MEMORY TIPS

Memory Tips from the Alzheimer's Society

1. Write things down.
2. Keep a diary or notebook.
3. Keep a weekly timetable.
4. Keep important things in one place.
5. Have a routine.
6. Keep important phone numbers by the phone.
7. Use labels to remind you of things (e.g., “lock this door”).
8. If you need to remember to bring something with you when you leave the house, leave it by the door.
9. Do not panic, give yourself plenty of time.
10. Use pill reminder boxes.
11. Don't be afraid to ask for help.

ADHD

Tips for Parents

1. Note problem behaviors (both intensity and frequency) to make problems more objective and to monitor behavioral change.
2. Try to spend 10-15 minutes a day alone with the child and let the child know that he or she is important.
3. Use consistent schedules/routines and give forewarning of upcoming change.
4. Give one or two clear instructions at a time and have child repeat them back to you.
5. Have clear and concise rules with consistent consequences and rewards.
6. Have a special, quiet spot for doing homework.
7. Parent should take a break or timeout from the child if feeling frustrated or overwhelmed.
8. Stress that the child's behavior and not the child is the problem.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Safety Tips

■ General Tips

1. Have important phone numbers nearby for you and your children (e.g., police, hotlines, friends, shelter, etc.).
2. Ask friends or neighbors to call the police if they suspect violence is occurring.
3. Teach children to dial 911.
4. Have a code word that you can use when you need help.
5. Have a plan for getting out of your home as quickly and safely as possible.
6. Identify safer places in your home where there are exits and no weapons. If you feel abuse is about to occur, try to get abuser into one of these safer places.
7. Try to rid home of weapons.
8. Think of where you could go if you needed to, and keep an emergency bag of things that you need everyday.

■ Items That Should Be Taken, if Possible, in an Emergency

- Children (if it is safe).
- Money.
- Keys to car, house, work.
- Extra clothes.
- Medicine.
- Important papers for you and your children.
- Birth certificates.
- Social Security cards.
- School and medical records.
- Bank books, credit cards.
- Driver's license.
- Car registration.
- Welfare identification.
- Passports, green cards, work permits.
- Lease/rental agreement.
- Mortgage payment book, unpaid bills.
- Insurance papers.
- Personal Protection Order (PPO), divorce papers, custody orders.
- Address book.
- Pictures, jewelry, things that are meaningful to you.
- Items for your children (toys, blankets, etc.).

(continued on next page)

Domestic Violence Safety Tips (continued)

■ *If Leaving an Abusive Relationship*

1. Identify four places you could go if you leave your home.
2. Identify people who might help you if you left. Think about people who will keep a bag for you or lend you money.
3. Keep change for phone calls or consider getting a cell phone.
4. Open a bank account or get a credit card in your name.
5. Think about how you might leave. Try doing things that get you out of the house – taking out the trash, walking the family pet or going to the store. Practice how you would leave.
6. Consider how you could take your children with you safely. There are times when taking your children with you may put all of your lives in danger. You need to protect yourself to be able to protect your children.
7. Put together a bag of things you use everyday. Hide it where it is easy for you to retrieve.

■ *If You Have Recently Left an Abusive Relationship*

1. Consider getting a cell phone. There are cell phones available that are programmed to dial only 911.
2. Consider getting a Personal Protection Order from the court. Always keep a copy on you. Give a copy to the police, people who take care of your children, their schools and your boss.
3. Change the locks. Consider installing stronger doors, smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, a security system and outside lights.
4. Tell friends and neighbors that your abuser no longer lives with you. Ask them to call the police if they see your abuser near your home or children.
5. Tell people who take care of your children the names of people who are allowed to pick them up. If you have a Personal Protection Order protecting your children, give their teachers and babysitters a copy of it.
6. Tell someone at work about what has happened. Ask that person to screen your calls. If you have a PPO that includes where you work, consider giving your boss a copy of it and a picture of the abuser. Think about and practice a safety plan for your workplace. This should include going to and from work.
7. You may want to avoid using the same stores or businesses that you did when you were with your abuser.
8. Have someone that you can call if you feel down.
9. Find a safe way to speak with your abuser if you must.
10. Go over your safety plan often.