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Treating mild depression: your choices

Non-drug options should be considered before the use of medicines for all cases of mild depression. Appropriate ways to treat mild depression, according to Dr Kelsey Hegarty of the University of Melbourne writing in the latest issue of *Australian Prescriber*, are psychological therapies, self-help and exercise programs.

Over the last decade the number of antidepressant medicines being prescribed has gone up. But, according to Dr Hegarty, there is not a lot of evidence to support the use of antidepressants for mild depression.

People diagnosed with mild depression should discuss the available treatment options with their doctor. The non-drug options include counselling, for example interpersonal therapy, problem solving therapy and cognitive behaviour therapy. There are also other therapies such as St John's wort, as well as self-help books, internet sites, and leaflets which may be able to assist.

Although mild depression can be difficult to diagnose, it can usually be successfully treated. People who are concerned they may be depressed should therefore discuss their mood with their doctor.

For more information about your medicines, you can call NPS *Medicines Line* on 1300 888 763 between 9am and 6pm Eastern Standard Time (EST) for the cost of a local call (mobile calls may cost more). You may also like to read the latest issue of *MedicinesTalk*, which explores depression. *MedicinesTalk* is a newsletter available online at www.nps.org.au in the consumer section.

For the complete article visit the *Australian Prescriber* website www.australianprescriber.com. *Australian Prescriber* is an independent review providing critical commentary on drugs and therapeutics for health professionals. It is published by National Prescribing Service (NPS), an independent, non-profit organisation funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing. NPS works to improve the health of all Australians through Quality Use of Medicines.

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