

FIGURE 21: Antidepressant drugs currently available in Australia.

CLASS	ANTI DEPRESSANT EFFECT** (score out of 10)	ANTI-ANXIETY EFFECT** (score out of 10)	SIDE-EFFECT BURDEN (score out of 10)	DOSE STRATEGY	USEFULNESS IN GENERAL PRACTICE (score out of 10)	USEFULNESS IN SPECIALIST PRACTICE (score out of 10)	MAJOR ADVANTAGES	MAJOR DISADVANTAGES	MAJOR DRUG INTERACTIONS
1. SELECTIVE SEROTONIN REUPTAKE INHIBITORS (SSRIs)									
SERTRALINE (Zoloft)	8	2	<1	50-200mg Once daily	9	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-sedating Specificity for Obsessive Compulsive Disorder Highly effective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nausea; agitation; sleep disturbance; headache; sexual dysfunction Drug interactions 	+
CITALOPRAM (Cipramil, Talohexal)*	(8)	(2)	(1)	20-60mg Once daily	(8)	(8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relative lack of drug interactions 		(+)
PAROXETINE (Aropax, Paxtine)	8	3	1	10-40mg Once daily	8	8		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aches and pains; fatigue 	+
FLUOXETINE (Prozac, Erocac, Lovan, Zactin)	8	2	1	10-40mg Once daily	6	6		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long half-life (metabolite) Drug interactions 	++
FLUVOXAMINE (Luvox, Faverin)*	(8)	(2)	(1)	50-200mg Once daily	(8)	(8)			+
2. SEROTONIN (5HT₂) ANTAGONISTS									
NEFAZODONE (Serzone)	5	5	2	200-600mg Divided doses Evening preference	5	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Treatment of anxiety Improves sleep No sexual side-effects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sleepiness; dizziness Drug interactions 	+
3. SEROTONIN AND NORADRENALINE REUPTAKE INHIBITORS (SNRIs)									
VENLAFAXINE (Efexor, Efexor-XR)	9	2	3	75-375mg Daily dose (XR) Evening preference	3	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Efficacy in severe depression Few drug interactions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anxiety; nausea; fatigue; headache; sexual dysfunction; increased blood pressure 	(+)
4. REVERSIBLE INHIBITORS OF MONOAMINE OXIDASE - A (RIMAs)									
MOCLOBEMIDE (Aurorix, ARIMA)	2	1	<1	450-900mg Divided doses Morning preference	5	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use in depression with fatigue Non-sedating No sexual side-effects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insomnia; anxiety; headache 	+
5. NORADRENALINE - SEROTONIN SPECIFIC ANTIDEPRESSANTS (NaSSAs)									
MIRTAZAPINE# (Avanza, Remeron)	(8)	(6)	(4)	15-45mg Evening dose	(8)	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Treatment of anxiety Improves sleep Low drug interaction potential No sexual side-effects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sleepiness Weight gain Dizziness Headache 	+
6. HETEROCYCLICS									
MIANSERIN (Tolvon, Lumin, Lerivon)	3	2	3	30-90mg Divided doses Evening preference	1	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safety in medically-ill 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sleepiness 	+
7. TRICYCLIC ANTIDEPRESSANTS (TCAs)									
HIGH DOSE Preferred agents - DESIPRAMINE, NORTRIPTYLINE (Pertofran, Nortabs)	9	3	9	100-250mg Divided doses Evening preference	1	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Efficacy in severe depression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wide side-effect profile including: low blood pressure; cardiotoxicity; sleepiness/work impairment 	+++
LOW DOSE AMITRIPTYLINE, IMIPRAMINE (Tryptanol, Tofranil, Prothiaden)	4	3	7	10-50mg Evening dose	1	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use in chronic pain syndromes and fibromyalgia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wide side-effect profile 	++
8. MONOAMINE OXIDASE INHIBITORS (MAOIs)									
PHENELZINE (Nardil) TRANALCYPRIMINE (Parnate)	6	4	6	Divided doses Morning preference	0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use in atypical depression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Postural hypotension; agitation; insomnia Serious drug and food interactions (cheese, red wine) 	+++

Reference: Hickie et al. Aust N Z J Psychiatry 1999, 33, 642-649
 * Insufficient experience, therefore, assume characteristics of the SSRI class.
 # Estimated by clinical team.

** 1. All of these drugs have been shown to be effective antidepressant agents. These columns demonstrate their relative efficacy as judged by clinical psychiatrists.
 2. The anti-anxiety effect described here is principally for generalised anxiety disorder.