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Medication Table: Antidepressants (including SSRIs) for Children/Youth

Sommaire : This medication table is for informational purposes only and is not a replacement for clinical judgment and consulting a drug reference (such as PDR or Lexi-Comp).

Antidepressant Medications for Child, Youth

Medication	Forms	Dose (Start, Initial Target, Max)	Comments Indication / Comments
Specific serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRI)			
Fluoxetine* (Prozac)	Capsule: 10,20, 40 Liquid (20 mg/5 mL)	Child: Start 10 mg, initial target 20 mg, max 30-40 mg Adol: Start 10 mg, initial target 20 mg, max 60 mg Adult: Start 10 mg, initial target 20, max 60 mg	FDA: MDD, OCD, Bulimia Nervosa, Panic, PMDD MDD (8-17 y/o), OCD (7-17 y/o) Long half life helpful for those who might miss doses.
Citalopram (Celexa)	Tablet: 10,20,40 mg Can be cut, crushed (score line) or compounded (4 mg/mL solution).	Child: Start 5-10 mg, initial target 20 mg, max 40 mg Adol/adult: Start 20 mg, initial target 20-40 mg, max 40 mg	FDA: MDD (adolescent) ; Do not exceed 40 mg daily due to QT prolongation
Escitalopram (Cipralex, Lexapro in US)	Tablet: 5,10,20 mg Can be cut, crushed (score line) or compounded to 2 mg/mL or 8 mg/mL.	Child: Start 5 mg, initial target 10 mg, max 10 mg Adol/adult: Start 5 mg daily, initial target 10 mg, max 20 mg daily	FDA: MDD & GAD (adolescent) Do not exceed 20 mg daily due to QT prolongation
Sertraline (Zoloft)	Capsule: 25,50,100 mg Can be cut, crushed or compounded as 10-20 mg/mL.	Child: Start 25 mg, initial target 50-100 mg, max 150 mg Adol/adult: Start 25 mg, initial target 100; max 200 mg	FDA: MDD, OCD, Panic, PTSD, PMDD, SAD (adolescent) OCD (age 6-17)
Fluvoxamine (Luvox)	Tablet: 50,100 mg Can be cut, crushed or compounded (50 mg/5 mL).	Child: Start 25 mg, initial target 50 mg daily, max 100-150 mg daily Adol/adult: Start 50 mg, initial target 100-150 mg, max 300 mg	FDA: OCD (age 8-17)

Paroxetine (Paxil)	Tablet: 10,20,30,40 mg Do not crush, break, or chew ER or IR film-coated tablets. May be compounded (10 mg/5 mL of IR formulation).	Child: Start 5 mg, initial target 20-30 mg, max 40-60 mg Adol/adult: Start 10 mg, initial target 20 mg, max 60-100 mg	FDA: MDD, OCD, Panic, SAD, GAD, PTSD -- not 1st line since short half-life and **high association with suicidal ideation**
Serotonin-noradrenaline reuptake inhibitors (SNRI)			
Venlafaxine XR (Effexor)	Capsule: 37.5, 75, 150 mg Capsule may be opened, and contents sprinkled in food. Can be compounded.	Child: Start 37.5 mg, initial target 75-112.5 mg, max 150 mg Age 12+: Start 75 mg, titrate to 75-225 mg daily, max 375 mg	FDA: MDD, GAD, Panic, SAD 3rd line for major depression in children/adolescents (Dopheide, 2006)
Desvenlafaxine (Pristiq)	Tablet (Extended release): 50,100 mg Tablet cannot be divided, crushed, chewed or dissolved. Some pharmacies may compound but this changes its release.	Child: Lack of data Age 12+: Start 50 mg, initial target 50 mg, max 100 mg	Off-label for children; Negative trial for child depression (Atkinson, 2018)
Duloxetine (Cymbalta)	Capsule: 20, 30, 60 mg Label states capsule should not be opened, but Institute of Safe Medication Practices states capsule can be opened and contents added to apple sauce or apple juice.	Child: Start 30 mg, initial target 60 mg, max 60 mg Age 12+: Start 30 mg, initial target 60, max 120 mg	FDA: GAD (aged 7+) Other indications MDD, diabetic neuropathy
Norepinephrine–dopamine reuptake inhibitors (NDRIs)			
Bupropion SR (Wellbutrin SR)	Tablet: 100, 150 mg ; Do not crush/ cut/ chew	Child: Unknown Adol/adult: Start 100 mg, initial target 150 mg daily; max 400 mg daily	Depression; ADHD, smoking cessation.
Bupropion XL (Wellbutrin XL)	Tablet: 150, 300 mg ; do not crush/cut/chew	Child: Unknown Adol/adult: Start 150 mg, initial target 300 mg; max 450 mg	Depression; ADHD, smoking cessation.
NaSSA (Noradrenergic and specific serotonergic antidepressants)			
Mirtazapine (Remeron)	Tablet: 15,30,45 mg RD: 15,30,45 mg	Child: Unknown Adol/adult: Start 15 mg qhs, initial target 30 mg qhs, max 45 mg qhs	Off-label in children/youth. Possibly helpful for comorbid anxiety/depression with ADHD; sleep issues.
Tricyclic Antidepressants (TCAs)			
Clomipramine (Anafranil)	Tablet: 10,25,50 mg	Child: Start 25 mg qhs, initial target 100 mg qhs, max 200 mg qhs Adol/adult: Start 50 mg qhs, initial target 100-200 mg qhs, max 300 mg qhs	FDA approval for OCD, age 10+

Amitriptyline (Elavil)	Tablet:10,25,50 mg	Adult: Start 50 mg bedtime, increase up to 150 mg max.

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References:

- Guidelines for Adolescent Depression in Primary Care (GLAD-PC), 2018 http://www.glad-pc.org/