

Selecting speed to taper based on risk of withdrawal symptoms

Estimate risk of withdrawal symptoms by combining risk factors (antidepressant drug, duration of therapy, dose, and past experience) and generating *TOTAL risk score.

Risk factor		Score	My score
Antidepressant			
venlafaxine, desvenlafaxine, duloxetine paroxetine, mirtazapine moclobemide	High risk	4	
sertraline, escitalopram, fluoxetine, citalopram, fluvoxamine, vortioxetine amitriptyline, nortriptyline, clomipramine, imipramine bupropion	Moderate risk	2	
trimipramine, dosulepin	Low risk	1	
agomelatine	Lowest risk	0	
Duration of antidepressant therapy			
	Very long term (>3 years)	3	
	Long-term (1-3 years)	2	
	Intermediate term (6-12 months)	1	
	Short term (1-6 months)	0	
Dose of antidepressant			
	Greater than minimum recommended dose	1	
	Minimum recommended dose or lower	0	
Past experience of antidepressant withdrawal symptoms			
	Very severe	3	
	Severe	2	
	Mild to moderate	1	
	None/unknown	0	
*My TOTAL risk score			

Select speed to taper based on *TOTAL risk score and risk of withdrawal symptoms:

*Total score	Risk	Speed to taper
• ≥ 9	Very high	Even slower
• 5 - 8	High	Slower or Even slower
• 1 - 4	Moderate	Faster or Slower
• 0	Low	Faster

Adapted from Maudsley Deprescribing Guidelines, p105. Based on Horowitz MA, Framer A, Hengartner MP, et al. Estimating risk of antidepressant withdrawal from a review of published data. CNS Drugs. 2023;37(2):143-57

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