

## Anti-depressants

Media coverage regarding anti-depressants, particularly through advertising is flourishing. On the one hand, this is good news because it helps to “normalize” depression, one of the most common psychological issues that people face. However, viewers are often left with the impression that just popping a pill will cure all ills.

Depression is a highly treatable condition. Data consistently demonstrates that there are three critical components to recovery from severe depression: **medication, talk therapy, and physical exercise**. Media often focuses only on medication as the solution and encourages people to “just ask your doctor” even though that doctor may not specialize in psychological problems. As a result, many people on medication are only receiving 1/3 of the recommended treatment for depression.

It is important to know that not everyone who is depressed needs medication. Supportive therapy and life style changes can work very well in curing many forms of depression.

### Signs of depression include:

*Change in sleeping patterns, persistent sad or blue mood, changes in appetite or weight, isolation or withdrawal, anger and hostility, changes in relationships, loss of interest in activities, loss of energy*

If you think you might be depressed, make an appointment with a psychologist or psychiatrist. Talk with that person about your symptoms. Make sure that all three aspects of treatment are discussed and that you participate in and follow the recommended treatment plan. While it may take some hard work on your part, you can feel happier and more in control by appropriately addressing your symptoms.

**Danger:** mixing any kind of anti-depressant or anti-anxiety medication with alcohol or street drug is potentially lethal. Not taking your medication on the day you intend to get drunk does not work. The medication has built up in your system and stopping it for a day or two does not alleviate the hazards of combining drugs and alcohol. In addition, the medication only works if you take it consistently.

On campus, the Wellness Center works with students who suffer from depression and/or anxiety. If you or a friend is having thoughts of suicide, do not wait to get assistance. Call now!

Wellness Services – (660)562-1348

Campus Safety – (660)562-1254

St. Francis Mental Health Crisis Line – (660)562-2227 or 1-800-841-3866

