

[IMAGE]

Do Antidepressants Even Work?

By Editorial Staff

As their name suggests, antidepressants are designed to reduce depression symptoms and make you feel better about life. So why does new research suggest they don't improve quality of life? And if so, why are millions of doctors still prescribing – and millions of patients still taking – them?

Among people diagnosed with depression, long-term use of antidepressants (two years, per the study) doesn't appear to improve quality of life compared to depressed patients not taking the drugs. Researchers used data from the 2005-2015 United States' Medical Expenditures Panel Survey (MEPS) to identify diagnoses of depression disorder, with shocking results: over the study period, 17.47 million adult patients were diagnosed with depression *annually* and nearly *60 percent* took antidepressant medications. Writing about their findings in *PLOS One*, the study authors' conclude with this sobering reality: "The real-world effect of using antidepressant medications does not continue to improve patients' [health-related quality of life] over time."

antidepressants - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark Let's not forget that in addition to *not* improving quality of life over time, antidepressant medications also come with a long list of potential side effects – as do all medications. And considering that most people (this writer included) consider improving quality of life a primary reason to take any medication, much less ones designed to make you feel better about life, it begs the question (to ask to your prescribing doctor): "Why should I take antidepressants in the first place?" The follow-up question: "What nondrug options are available?"

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