



# Discontinuing your medication for depression:

*An important message from:*



**Mental Illness Research,  
Education and Clinical Center**

*Safely monitoring signs and symptoms, now that you are better and have been stable for some time*

*Your doctor has decided to work with you to discontinue your medication for depression.*

*It's important that you remain aware of the signs and symptoms of the illness, and have a plan to get treatment if you notice symptoms re-occurring.*

Discontinuing depression medications may occasionally result in withdrawal symptoms unrelated to depression itself:

- Stomach upset, vomiting, diarrhea
- Sleep disturbances
- Muscle spasms, tremors
- Increase or decrease in energy level
- Irregular heart beat
- Disequilibrium (dizziness and lightheadedness)
- Headaches, irritability
- Slowed thinking
- Mild depression

Symptoms usually occur within 24 to 72 hours after discontinuing the medication. They are more likely to occur if the medication is stopped abruptly. They usually go away quickly once the medication is started again.

Tapering off medications over the course of several weeks can minimize the risk of withdrawal. Watch for the following signs and symptoms and report them immediately to your doctor:

- Loss of interest or pleasure
- Irritable or depressed mood
- Change in appetite or weight
- Too much or too little sleep
- Fatigue or loss of energy
- Feelings of worthlessness or inappropriate guilt
- Diminished ability to think or concentrate
- Re-occurring thoughts of death

Look for these early signs of major depressive disorder and work with your doctor to have a plan. . . a plan to help you seek treatment if the symptoms return once you discontinue medication.



**Anchor Sites:**

HOUSTON  
LITTLE ROCK  
NEW ORLEANS  
OKLAHOMA CITY

**Administration Offices:**

Central Arkansas Veterans  
Healthcare System

2200 Fort Roots Drive  
(16MIR/NLR)  
North Little Rock, AR 72114  
[www.mirecc.va.gov/visn16](http://www.mirecc.va.gov/visn16)

