

## SPG GUIDE TO DEPRESSION

Approximately 1 in 5 children in the United States suffers from anxiety or depression. Your Somerset Pediatric Group provider has diagnosed your child with depression. Depression is common in children and adolescents. Depression can be well treated with a combination of medication and therapy. Studies have shown the combination of medication and therapy to be very effective than if only one treatment is used and will best allow us to treat for a shorter period of time.

Medication for depression is FDA approved in children. Most children begin to see benefits of the medication in 4-8 weeks. Your provider may have to increase the dosing of the medication a few times to ensure maximum benefits since we prefer to use the lowest dose of medication possible. Some children on medication have side effects which may include: nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, strange dreams, tremors and sweating.

Depression medication must be increased up to an ideal dose as well as decreased down slowly when discontinuing the medication. **DO NOT** abruptly stop the medication without speaking with your Somerset Pediatric Group provider.

There is a black box warning on medications used to treat depression. Please discuss this warning with your health provider. Please help us and continue to watch your child closely for any signs of suicidal thoughts or increased concerns. Call us if you see any red flags.

Follow up is very important. Please be sure to call and give updates to your provider weekly for one month. If your child is stable on the medication your provider will then request phone follow ups every other week for an additional month and then monthly as long as the medication is prescribed.

Please ensure your child is eating a healthy diet, exercising, getting enough sleep and limiting caffeine while on medication for depression. Therapy in addition to medication is much more effective than medication alone, therefore, continue to have child in therapy.