

What Doctors Don't Tell You / Antidepressants The Big Pharma Cash Machine loves Drugs for Life

A cynic might argue that drug companies don't want to cure anyone. If such an extraordinary thing happened, they'd lose a customer.

No, the business model has to be 'Drugs for Life'. You want a high 'retention' rate to build a solid foundation that provides the base for explosive, and profitable, growth—usually that's the business of the new 'super drug' that is invariably anything but. Only death of the patient, or 'client', upsets the plan.

The SSRI (selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor) antidepressants are drugs that follow the blueprint to perfection. Once you're on the drugs, you're probably on them for life. Not because they're especially effective—the whole idea that they correct a chemical imbalance in the brain is a nonsense—but because withdrawal symptoms are so devastating that people start taking them again.

The last chance saloon is within the first six months, and certainly before two years. If you can stop taking them within that time, you have a fighting chance to stay off them for good. After that, you're probably on antidepressants for life—as the vast majority of users in the States are.

This sorry picture has been uncovered by a research team from University College London. They surveyed 310 Britons who had at one point attempted to stop taking their prescribed antidepressant. Of these, 79 percent reported at least one withdrawal symptom and 45 percent experienced symptoms they classified as moderate or severe.

Across the entire group, 38 percent said they were unable to stop treatments because of withdrawal effects, and this rose to 79 percent among those who had been taking antidepressants for two years or more.

Withdrawal symptoms included anxiety, worsened mood, agitation and fatigue, along with depression and anxiety symptoms; 76 percent also reported physical reactions such as dizziness, headache, vertigo, or nausea.

The researchers found that the odds of experiencing any withdrawal effects were 10 times greater for those who had been on antidepressants for more than two years, compared to those who had been taking them for less than six months.

Withdrawal symptoms lasted for around three months, but around 10 percent of the participants said they were still suffering from them a year later, as the study in *Psychiatry Research* explains (*Psychiatry Research*, 2025; 116497 DOI: 10.1016/j.psychres.2025.116497).

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