

Antidepressants for neuropathic pain – What do you use?

January – February 2009

Number of responses = 161

1) For neuropathic pain, which antidepressant do you *most commonly use* first-line? (one_of)

answer	votes	% of vote
Amitriptyline	131	81%
Dosulepin (dothiepin)	0	0%
Duloxetine	3	2%
Imipramine	2	1%
Lofepramine	0	0%
Mirtazapine	5	3%
Nortriptyline	17	11%
Sertraline	0	0%
Venlafaxine	6	4%
Other	0	0%

2) Please state the starting dose you would generally use with your first-line antidepressant for neuropathic pain.

In summary, from those who completed this question:

- amitriptyline (131 responses)
 - 45% would use a starting dose of 10mg
 - 36% would use a starting dose of 10–25mg depending on the patient
- nortriptyline (12 responses)
 - 8 of the responses would use a starting dose of 10mg
 - 2 would use a starting dose of 10–25mg depending on the patient
- mirtazapine (5 responses)
 - all would use a starting dose of 15mg.

3) For neuropathic pain, which of the following antidepressants do you also use? (many_of)

answer	votes	% of voters
Amitriptyline	40	25
Dosulepin (dothiepin)	15	9
Duloxetine	26	16
Imipramine	14	9
Lofepramine	9	6
Mirtazapine	36	22
Nortriptyline	32	20
Sertraline	2	1
Venlafaxine	20	12
Other	5	3

4) Please state the starting doses you would generally use with other antidepressants for neuropathic pain.

In summary, from those who completed this question:

- mirtazapine (29 responses)
80% would use a starting dose of 15mg
- amitriptyline (23 responses)
70% would use a starting dose of 10mg
- nortriptyline (23 responses)
50% would use a starting dose of 10mg
13% would use a starting dose of 10–25mg depending on the patient
25% would use a starting dose of 25mg
- venlafaxine (18 responses)
50% would use 37.5mg and 50% would use 75mg
- duloxetine (17 responses)
65% would use a starting dose of 30mg
- dosulepin (10 responses)
90% would use a starting dose of 25mg.

5) Please state any other comments you have regarding your experience of the use of antidepressants in neuropathic pain.

Specific comments related to amitriptyline being poorly tolerated/to have unacceptable side effects and the need for slow titration. Others use amitriptyline when a sedative and/or antidepressant effect is also required.

General comments related to an inconsistent benefit and a preference for anti-epileptics (e.g. gabapentin / pregabalin) first-line for neuropathic pain.