

Algorithm for the Treatment of Depression in Bipolar Disorder

(to be used in conjunction with primary treatment algorithm)

AAP = atypical antipsychotic
 AD = antidepressant
 ECT = electroconvulsive therapy
 MAOI = monoamine oxidase inhibitor

AD1 = bupropionSR or SSRI
 AD2 = venlafaxine or nefazodone

LTG = lamotrigine

Stage 1

**Initiate or Optimize (↑↓)
Mood Stabilizing Medications**



Stage 2

**AD1
or
LTG**



Stage 3

**Add lithium
or
Switch to alternate AD
(AD1, LTG, or AD2)
or
Add additional AD
(AD1, LTG, or AD2)**



Stage 4

**Combination of 2 antidepressants
(choose from AD1, LTG, or AD2)**



Stage 5

**Switch AD to an MAOI
or
Add AAP medication**



Stage 6

**Use alternative not used at Stage 5
or
ECT
or
Other**
 (inositol, dopamine agonists, stimulants,
 thyroid, conventional antipsychotics,
 tricyclic antidepressants, omega 3,
 acupuncture, hormones)