

Vortioxetine for treating major depressive episodes

Information for the public

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What has NICE said?

Vortioxetine (Brintellix) is recommended as a possible treatment for adults having a first or recurrent major depressive episode, if the current episode has not responded to 2 antidepressants.

What does this mean for me?

If you are having a major depressive episode, and your doctor thinks that vortioxetine is the right treatment, you should be able to have the treatment on the NHS. Vortioxetine should be available on the NHS within 3 months of the guidance being issued.

If you are already taking vortioxetine but are not eligible for treatment as described above, you should be able to continue taking it until you and your doctor decide it is the right time to stop.

Why has NICE said this?

NICE looks at how well treatments work in relation to how much they cost compared with other treatments available on the NHS.

Vortioxetine was recommended because it has similar effectiveness to other treatments, and is cost effective compared with other third-line antidepressants.

The condition and the treatment

A major depressive episode is a period of symptoms of major depressive disorder. These symptoms include severe feelings of sadness, despair, hopelessness, and guilt or low self-worth, as well as tiredness, lack of interest in life and difficulty concentrating. People having a major depressive episode may be unable to eat or sleep, or to take part in social activities, may become completely withdrawn and may have suicidal thoughts or attempt suicide. The episodes can last from weeks to years, and can recur.

Vortioxetine (Brintellix) is an antidepressant that treats the symptoms of depression. It is thought to work by increasing levels of a chemical called serotonin in the brain.

[NHS Choices](#) may be a good place to find out more.

Sources of advice and support

- Depression Alliance, 0207 407 7584, www.depressionalliance.org
- MIND, 0208 519 2122, www.mind.org.uk
- SANE, 0300 304 7000, www.sane.org.uk
- Rethink Mental Illness, 0300 500 0927, www.rethink.org

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Accreditation

