

Antidepressants & genital numbness



In our survey, 809 mostly 2S/LGBTQ+ youth between the ages of 15-29 said they were no longer taking antidepressants or had gotten off antidepressants.



Antidepressants are medication people can take for many reasons, like depression. SSRIs and SNRIs are types of antidepressants. SSRIs and SNRIs have a lot of benefits but can also have adverse effects.



These effects can start while someone is taking their medication or after they stop. Some adverse effects can last for a long time or can permanently change sexual functioning. This can mean that the person is experiencing a condition called PSSD. PSSD stands for Post-SSRI/SNRI sexual dysfunction syndrome. One of the possible symptoms of PSSD is genital numbness. To learn more about PSSD, we surveyed 809 mostly 2S/LGBTQ+ youth between 15 and 29. We found that 13% of participants experience genital numbness after using SSRIs/SNRIs.



Although it is common, many people do not know about PSSD. Sadly, your healthcare provider might not know about PSSD as a harmful effect of SSRIs/SNRIs.



There are a few things you can do:

- Ask your healthcare provider about the possible adverse effects of your medication.
- Talk to your healthcare provider if you ever experience adverse effects.
- Know that there are many different types of antidepressants and you can ask for a different one.
- Share this resource with people who can benefit from it.



You can visit these websites to get more information and support:

- For PSSD: pssdnetwork.org, pssdcanada.ca, and rxisk.org
- To find gender-affirming help you can trust visit mindmapbc.ca
- To find more about our study visit unacorn.ca

*We included past users of psychiatric drugs and excluded those who had reported surgeries involving the genital area, including hysterectomy, and participants without sexual experience.

** Variables: Sedatives, antipsychotics, gender-affirming hormone treatment, age, sex, and PHQ-9 Category.

Source: Pirani Y, Delgado-Ron JA, Marinho P, Gupta A, Grey E, Watt S, MacKinnon KR, Salway T. Frequency of self-reported persistent post-treatment genital hypoesthesia among past antidepressant users: a cross-sectional survey of sexual and gender minority youth in Canada and the US. *Soc Psychiatry Psychiatr Epidemiol.* 2024 Sep 20. doi: 10.1007/s00127-024-02769-0. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 39302425.

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