



Understanding Depression

Around 29% of adults are diagnosed with depression at some point in their life.

1. Introduction

Depression, or depressive disorder, is a mental disorder that has negative impacts on how a patient thinks, feels and perceives the world around them. The causes of depression can be complex, as with other mental disorders, since there is a combination of social, psychological and biological factors that can contribute to the disorder. Depression can also lead to increased stress in some patients, affect other existing conditions, and otherwise affect a person's life.

2. Symptoms

The regularity of depression episodes can vary from person to person. Whether depression episodes are rare or frequent, some symptoms include:

- + Feelings of sadness, emptiness, or hopelessness
- + Angry outbursts, irritability or frustration
- + Sleeping too little or too much
- + Loss of interest in most or all activities that would normally bring joy
- + Anxiety, agitation or restlessness

3. Types

There are various types of depression depending on the severity, causes and symptoms:

- + Clinical depression or major depressive disorder
- + Persistent depressive disorder
- + Seasonal affective disorder
- + Premenstrual dysphoric disorder
- + Prenatal or postpartum depression
- + Atypical depression

Depression can also be caused by other conditions (i.e. Parkinson's disease) or be a part of other mental disorders (i.e. bipolar disorder).

4. Treatments

There are various treatments for depression, a combination of which can be effective depending on the presentation and patient.

- + **Medication:** antidepressants help many patients, though it's vital for medical providers to ensure they are aware of any adverse effects associated with the medications.
- + **Therapy:** many patients seek regular therapy to help cope with their symptoms.

Beyond these treatments, helping patients understand the importance of self-care will greatly help the effectiveness of treatment beyond therapy sessions and medication.

Did you know?

Depression is around 50% more common in women than in men.

For more information on depression and supportive resources, please visit [psychiatry.org/depression/](https://www.psychiatry.org/depression/).

References:

<https://www.psychiatry.org/patients-families/depression/what-is-depression>

<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/depression>

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/depression/symptoms-causes/syc-20356007>

<https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/9290-depression>