

## An Overview on Depression

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### Review Article

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#### ABSTRACT

Depression is a mood disorder that causes a persistent feeling of sadness and loss of interest. Also called major depressive disorder or clinical depression, it affects how you feel, think and behave and can lead to a variety of emotional and physical problems. It is a state of low mood and aversion to activity that can affect a person's thoughts, behaviour, feelings and sense of well-being.

### WHAT IS DEPRESSION?

Depression is a typical and crippling mind-set issue that is influencing increasingly individuals around the globe. An expected 350 million individuals of any age experience side effects of depression and around 13 percent of Americans take antidepressants—an assume that bounced to 25 percent for ladies in their 40s and 50s [1,2,3-11].

### IS DEPRESSION AN EMOTION OR FEELING?

It appears that most depression involves the numbing of emotions, especially grief, fear, anger and shame. Depression occurs when these emotions loop back on themselves, having feelings about feelings, sometimes without limit [5,8,10-21].

### TYPES OF DEPRESSION

If you are given a diagnosis of depression, you might be told that you have mild, moderate or severe depression. This describes what sort of impact your symptoms are having on you currently, and what sort of treatment you're likely to be offered. You might move between different mild, moderate and severe depression during one episode of depression or across different episodes [12,13-18,22-39].

There are also some specific types of depression:

- Seasonal affective disorder (SAD): Depression that usually (but not always) occurs in the winter.
- Dysthymia: Continuous mild depression that lasts for two years or more. Also called persistent depressive disorder or chronic depression [18,19].
- Prenatal depression: Sometimes also called antenatal depression, it occurs during pregnancy.
- Postnatal depression (PND): Occurs in the weeks and months after becoming a parent. Postnatal depression is usually diagnosed in women but it can affect men, too [13,19].

## CAUSES OF DEPRESSION

Although scientists agree that depression is a brain disorder, the debate continues about exact causes. Many factors may contribute to the onset of depression, including genetic characteristics, changes in hormone levels, certain medical illnesses, stress, grief, or substance abuse [20,40-74]. Any of these factors alone or in combination can bring about the specific changes in brain chemistry that lead to the many symptoms of depression, bipolar disorder and related conditions [2,4,21,22].

## SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- Feelings of helplessness and hopelessness: In a brief - nothing will ever get better and there's nothing you can do to improve your situation [7,64,70].
- Loss of interest in daily activities: You don't care anymore about former hobbies, pastimes, social activities, or sex. You've lost your ability to feel joy and pleasure.
- Appetite or weight changes: Significant weight loss or weight gain—a change of more than 5% of body weight in a month [22-28].
- Sleep changes: Either insomnia, especially waking in the early hours of the morning, or oversleeping.
- Anger or irritability: Feeling agitated, restless, or even violent. Your tolerance level is low, your temper short, and everything and everyone gets on your nerves [29,30].
- Loss of energy: Feeling fatigued, sluggish, and physically drained. Your whole body may feel heavy, and even small tasks are exhausting or take longer to complete.
- Self-loathing: Strong feelings of worthlessness or guilt. You harshly criticize yourself for perceived faults and mistakes [31-35].
- Reckless behavior: You engage in escapist behavior such as substance abuse, compulsive gambling, reckless driving, or dangerous sports [75].
- Concentration problems: Trouble focusing, making decisions, or remembering things.
- Unexplained aches and pains: An increase in physical complaints such as headaches, back pain, aching muscles, and stomach pain [16-18,36].

## RISK FACTORS

- Loneliness and isolation
- Lack of social support [76-78]
- Recent stressful life experiences
- Family history of depression
- Marital or relationship problems
- Financial strain
- Early childhood trauma or abuse
- Alcohol or drug abuse
- Unemployment or underemployment
- Health problems or chronic pain

## PREVENTION

Although depression is a highly treatable condition, some forms of depression may not be preventable [14,30,57,68,79-94]. That's because depression may be triggered by a malfunctioning of nerve cell connections in certain brain circuits. However, the latest medical studies confirm that depression may often be alleviated and sometimes prevented with good health habits [18,38,39]. Eating a healthy diet, getting regular exercise, and taking time out for fun and relaxation, may work together to prevent a depressed mood [40-52].

## TREATMENT

Treatment for depression involves either medication or talking treatments, or usually a combination of the two. The kind of treatment that your doctor recommends will be based on the type of depression you have [2,41,78,95-98].

Mild depression includes the treatment of Wait and See, Exercise and Self Health Groups while mild to moderate depression includes Talking Therapy and moderate to severe depression includes Antidepressants, Combination therapy, Mental Health teams [8,23,42,83,94].

## ONGOING RESEARCHES ON DEPRESSION

- Depression, Treatment and Maintenance Study
- The MoBI Project
- Managing Depression [99,100]
- Geriatric Telemental Health Research
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