

What is Major Depressive Disorder?

Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) is a common mental health disorder that may impact a person's mood, energy, ability to feel pleasure, and self-worth. MDD can also impact a person's appetite (i.e. over eating or under eating), sleep, and concentration.

Feeling sad or experiencing grief is a normal part of the human experience. However, when periods of sadness are intense and persistent over an extended period, it may impact other areas of one's life and make it difficult to function.

Who does it impact?

MDD impacts people of all genders, ages, racial and ethnic backgrounds.

Women are diagnosed with depression more often than men. Men may be less likely to identify, talk about or seek help for their feelings therefore they are at greater risk of symptoms being undiagnosed or untreated.

Studies also show higher rates and risk of depression among members of the LGBTQIA+ community.



Prepared by the
**Department of Social Work:
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To request additional brochures please contact:

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Additional Information

National Alliance On Mental Illness (NAMI)

www.nami.org

National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)

www.nimh.nih.gov

Additional Support

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

call or text 988

chat at 988lifeline.org

NAMI Helpline

call (800) 950-NAMI or text "Helpline" to 62640

Veterans and Their Loved Ones Crisis Line

call (800) 273-8255 or text 838255

National Helpline

call 211 for referrals for services such as housing, food, mental health, crisis and emergency, legal assistance, etc.

NIMH Resource Center

call (866) 615-6464

Information in this brochure was adapted from NIMH, NAMI and DSM-5 TR. Updated 2023.



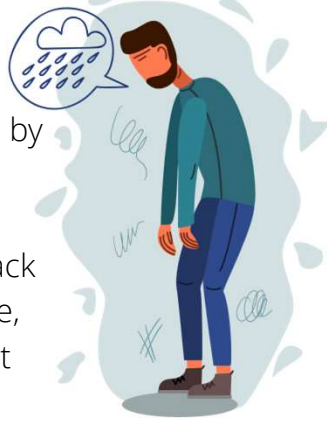
Major Depressive Disorder



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Signs & Symptoms

MDD is characterized by either an intense and persistent low (or irritable) mood or a lack of interest or pleasure, nearly every day for at least 2 weeks.



Additionally, to be diagnosed with MDD, a person must have at least 5 of the symptoms listed below:

- Feels sad, empty or hopeless
- Diminished interest or pleasure in all or almost all daily activities
- Difficulty concentration or making decisions
- Feeling worthless or inappropriately guilty
- Feeling really tired or lacking energy
- Extreme restlessness or lack of movement noticed by others
- Changes in appetite and weight (i.e. gaining or losing without dieting)
- Sleeping much more or much less than usual
- Frequent thoughts of death or suicide, suicide plan, attempted suicide

Did you know? In 2020, approximately 21 million U.S. adults aged 18 or older had at least one major depressive episode-this is 8.4% of the population.

What causes MDD?

There is no single cause of MDD. However, research suggest several factors may increase a person's risk of developing MDD. Factors can include:

- alcohol or drug use
- medical conditions, such as diabetes, cancer, chronic pain, or heart disease
- abuse during childhood
- medication side effects
- trauma
- life stages such as postpartum or perimenopause
- strain with finances or employment
- changes in relationships

Types of Depression

While MDD is a common type of depression, other types of depression can include:

- Depression with symptoms of psychosis, such as hallucinations or delusions
- Seasonal depression, which typically occurs at the same time each year during changes in seasons
- Peripartum, typically occurs during or after pregnancy



"I have come to understand that mental illness is a health issue like any other, and it is not something I should feel ashamed of."

- Brandt Schubbe

How is MDD treated?

Depression is typically treated with medication, psychotherapy, or both. In milder cases of depression, treatment might begin with psychotherapy alone, and medication added if the individual continues to experience symptoms. For moderate or severe depression, many doctors recommend a combination of medication and therapy at the start of treatment.

How can I support a loved one

It can be hard knowing how to support a loved one experiencing symptoms of MDD. Below are a few ideas to help your loved one:

- Providing them with support, love, and encouragement
- Validate how hard depression can be
- Help your loved one to stay connected to mental health treatment
- Remind them that, with time and treatment, the depression will subside

