



Depression

What is Depression?

Depression is a mood disorder in which an individual may experience distress and feel that their mood and emotions are not under their control. This may include the way they think about themselves, relate to others, and interact with the world around them. Depression varies in severity; it can be life threatening, and may require hospitalization. It can be chronic and recurrent where the risk of recurrence increases with each subsequent episode. Depression is influenced by many factors including childbirth, having a parent who experiences depression, physical illness, disability, death, divorce, major negative life events, pervasive negative thinking, and physical or emotional deprivations.

Forms of Depression:

Depression can take on different forms depending on the symptoms and factors associated with a particular case. For example, feelings of depression may be diagnosed as:

- Persistent Depressive Disorder
- Postpartum Depression
- Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)
- Bipolar Disorder



What are the signs and symptoms of Depression?

- Persistent sad, anxious, or "empty" mood
- Feelings of hopelessness, or pessimism
- Irritability
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, or helplessness
- Loss of interest or pleasure in hobbies and activities
- Feeling restless or having trouble sitting still
- Difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions
- Difficulty sleeping, early-morning awakening, or oversleeping
- Appetite and/or weight changes
- Decreased energy or fatigue
- Moving or talking more slowly
- Thoughts of death or suicide, or suicide attempts
- Aches or pains, headaches, cramps, or digestive problems without a clear physical cause and/or that do not ease even with treatment

How is Depression treated?

- Psychological Therapy (such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and Interpersonal Therapy)
- Counselling
- Medication
- Support Groups
- Self-Help Strategies
- Light Therapy
- Relapse Prevention



Accommodations for Students with Depression:

- Reduced course load
- Extra time for tests/assignments
- Condition impacts attendance
- Audio recording device
- Writing tests with AS
- Alternate forms of:
 - Group work
 - Presentations
 - Classroom participation
- No more than one exam in 24 hr period

*All accommodations are based on individual needs and recommendations.

For more information:

- Canadian Mental Health Association. (2014). Depression and Bipolar Disorder. Retrieved from <https://cmha.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Depression-and-Bipolar-NTNL-brochure-2014-web.pdf>
- Canadian Psychological Association. (2021). "Psychology Works" Fact Sheet: Depression. Retrieved from https://cpa.ca/docs/File/Publications/FactSheets/FS_Depression_EN_2021.pdf
- Mental health first aid. Retrieved from <http://mhfa.ca/en/course-info/courses/mhfa-basic>