



Am I
Experiencing
Depression?



Approximately
280 million
Suffer from
Depression

3.8% of the
Worlds Population

* World Health Organization

It is
Estimated
that
5%
of **Adults**
and
5.7%
of **Older Adults**
are **Clinically**
Depressed

Given the impact that depression has in daily functioning, and its prevalence, it is considered a leading cause of disability.

Depression is not a single diagnosis. Some people can experience an episode of depression while others can experience a recurrence of symptoms from time to time. The most common form of depression, and the one most people are familiarized with is [Major Depressive Disorder](#).



Symptoms of Major Depressive Disorder

should be present most of the time for a period of two weeks.

Depressed Mood



This is what most people associate with depression. It can also translate to persistent feelings of sadness, hopelessness, and loneliness.

Anhedonia



Anhedonia or little interest in activities that people used to enjoy and diminished pleasure.

Changes in Appetite



People can experience an increase or decrease in appetite with weight change.

Changes in Sleep



Changes in sleep pattern, presenting either hypersomnia or insomnia. Many people with depression also report having vivid nightmares.

Fatigue



Some people describe this as feeling heaviness in their body, being slower than usual, or not having energy.

Guilt



Guilt or feelings of worthlessness.

Reduced concentration



Reduced concentration, difficulties making simple decisions.

Thoughts of Death



Thoughts of death without suicidal ideation (e.g. thinking they would be better off dead, would not be a burden to their family), suicidal ideation without a plan, suicidal ideation with a plan, suicide attempt.

Risk Factors for Depression

Environmental • Biological • Psychological Disorders



Environmental Factors:

Adverse childhood experiences, including trauma.

Experiencing loss (death of a close family member or significant other, end of a relationship, loss of employment, decline in health), prolonged stress, significant life changes or events (natural disasters, major surgery, experiencing a car crash, moving to a different state, changing jobs, retiring).

Psychosocial stressors: lower income, limited formal education, racism and discrimination.

Biological Factors:

Genetics: First degree family members with Major Depressive Disorder.

Use of medication that can induce depressed mood (e.g. prednisone).

Medical conditions such as heart problems, stroke, cancer, chronic pain, Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, and hormone related conditions such as Thyroid problems.

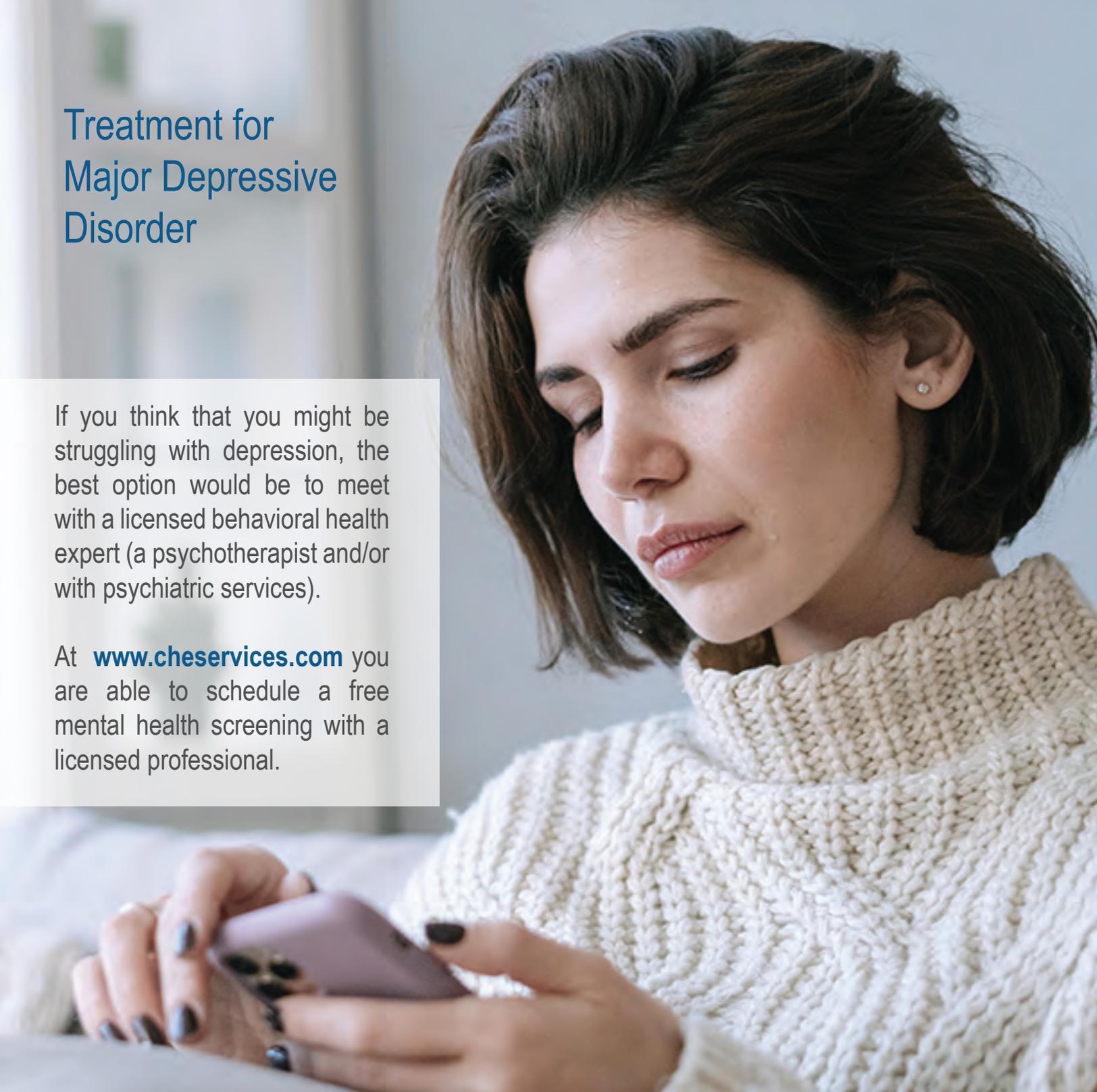
Psychological Disorders that can lead to developing MDD:

Anxiety Disorders

Eating Disorders

Borderline Personality Disorder

Substance Use Disorders



Treatment for Major Depressive Disorder

If you think that you might be struggling with depression, the best option would be to meet with a licensed behavioral health expert (a psychotherapist and/or with psychiatric services).

At www.cheservices.com you are able to schedule a free mental health screening with a licensed professional.

If services are recommended, your licensed therapist will complete a biopsychosocial history and administer mood inventories to complete a formal assessment and develop a treatment plan. There are many empirically based treatment modalities for Major Depressive Disorder, including Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), Behavior Therapy (BT), Mindfulness-based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT), and Interpersonal Psychotherapy (IPT) among others. Depending on the level of depression, your psychotherapist might make a referral for psychiatry evaluation.

10 Tips if you are Struggling with Depression



1. Don't blame yourself for being depressed. Depression is a clinical condition. You did not choose to be depressed.
2. Remind yourself that you have decided to do something about your depression (e.g. have considered psychotherapy or psychiatric treatment, scheduled an appointment, are actively participating in therapy, have activated your social support, are working with your coping skills).
3. Have compassion towards yourself. Know that you will have better days and others in which you might need to focus more on self-care.
4. Engage in one or two activities that you used to enjoy.
5. Choose music wisely. Music is strongly connected to our memories and emotions. If a song makes you become teary, it is better to change that song.
6. Improve your physical activity. Start with small goals and soak in that wonderful feeling of accomplishment once finished.
7. Be mindful of your diet. This includes choosing healthier meal options and limiting/avoiding alcohol, caffeine, and nicotine.
8. Make sleep a priority. Establish a sleeping schedule and stick to the routine.
9. Give yourself credit when you are having a good day.
10. Practice relaxation exercises. This could be as easy as taking deep breaths, visualizing yourself at the beach, or following a guided meditation video.

CHE Relaxation Videos:

Click to Watch 

Mindfulness Exercise
Figure 8 Breathing
Relaxation Tips

How to Improve our Social Interaction when Experiencing Depression:

All throughout life, we are consistently establishing and maintaining various social connections and bonds with various people. It feels good to be included and accepted in a group. It can become very obvious when it seems that you are not being included amongst your friends. Experiencing feelings of rejection or perceiving that you are left out are painful and oftentimes confusing occurrences. At times, trying to figure out the steps to resolving these issues can leave you feeling even more helpless. There are a number of things a person can do to cope with feeling rejected or unwanted.



1. Make sure you haven't misinterpreted the situation and avoid jumping to conclusions:

It can be easy to experience negative feelings when you feel that you are being left out, specifically when thinking it is intentional. However, that may not be the case. Take a moment, step back to calm your feelings down, and evaluate the situation. Jumping to conclusions can result in further complications.

2. Communicate your feelings:

The saying that there is more than one side to the story is an absolute true statement. Take time to express your feelings. Utilize assertive statements, such as "I" statements and be specific about your feelings.

3. Extend an invitation yourself:

If you are feeling left out, you can take the initiative and invite others to do an activity together. Your friends don't always have to initiate the invitation to do things together.

4. Get to know new people:

If the current relationships that you have are not filling your companionship needs, then it might be time to consider finding new friends or social groups. Consider people in your work or in your community that have similar interests and hobbies.



Loving Someone with Depression

1. Educate yourself about depression

Depression is a complicated disorder that impacts the thoughts, feelings and behaviors of a person experiencing depression. Although depression is a treatable mental health disorder, it can be difficult for the person to cope with it and also for loved ones to understand what the person experiencing depression is going through. Educating yourself on the different aspects of depression, assists you in understanding what your loved one with depression is experiencing.

2. Provide support and ask how you can help:

Although you may feel helpless in helping your loved one with depression, there are ways that you can help. Ask them what type of support or help they need. Let the person know that you are there to support them in any way possible.

3. Take care of yourself:

Loving someone with depression can be overwhelming at times. Providing support and attending to the needs of your loved one can lead to not getting your needs met as well. Take time to engage in enjoyable activities that provide stress relief and feelings of calm. Develop a support system of someone that you can express your feelings to openly.

4. Don't try to "fix" your loved one:

It is a natural inclination to help your loved one when they are in pain or experiencing some sort of suffering. You may want to do things such as buying them something they like, tell them how wonderful they are or give them recommendations of how to cope with their depression. It may be difficult to understand that you can't "fix" your loved one. Depression is a complex disorder and is experienced differently in every person. Learn how to support your loved one. Express that you are there and verbalize your support.

5. Understand your loved one is more than their depression:

Recognizing that your loved one is more than their illness. They have thoughts and feelings that aren't related to depression.

6. Be flexible:

Understand that your loved one is going to have good days and difficult days with their depression.

Additional Resources



Webpages:

CHE Behavioral Health Services
<https://www.cheservices.com/blog>

American Psychological Association
<https://www.apa.org/search?query=depression>

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

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



CHE BEHAVIORAL
HEALTH SERVICES



www.cheservices.com

Books:

It's Ok That You're Not OK: Meeting Grief and Loss in a Culture That Doesn't Understand.

Author: Megan Devine

The Noonday Demon: An Atlas of Depression.

Author: Andrew Solomon

The Happiness Trap: How to Stop Struggling and Start Living: A Guide to ACT.

Author: Russ Harris

Self-Compassion: The Proven Power of Being Kind to Yourself.

Author: Kristin Neff

Grief Works: Stories of Life, Death, and Surviving.

Author: Julia Samuel

Your Happiness Toolkit: 16 Strategies for Overcoming Depression, and Building a Joyful, Fulfilling Life.

Author: Carrie M. Wrigley

Overcoming Unwanted Intrusive Thoughts: A CBT-Based Guide to Getting Over Frightening, Obsessive, or Disturbing Thoughts.

Authors: Sally M. Winston and Martin N. Seif

Essential Art Therapy Exercises: Effective Techniques to Manage Anxiety, Depression and PTSD.

Author: Leah Guzman

The Mindful Way Through Depression: Freeing Yourself from Chronic Unhappiness.

Authors: Mark Williams, John Teasdale, Zindel Segal, and Jon Kabat-Zinn

I Don't Want to Talk About It: Overcoming the Secret Legacy of Male Depression.

Author: Terrance Real