

Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) Fact Sheet

What is MDD?

Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) is a condition characterized by a disruptive combination of emotional and physical symptoms that interfere with a person's ability to work, sleep, study, eat, and enjoy once-pleasurable activities.

What are the signs and symptoms of MDD?

Those living with this serious and debilitating disorder experience a variety of symptoms that occur nearly every day for at least two weeks, including:

- Persistent sad or "empty" feelings
- Feelings of hopelessness or pessimism
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness or helplessness
- Irritability or restlessness
- Loss of interest in activities or hobbies once pleasurable , including sex
- Fatigue and decreased energy
- Difficulty concentrating, remembering details or making decisions
- Insomnia, early-morning wakefulness, or excessive sleeping
- Overeating or appetite loss
- Thoughts of suicide or suicide attempts
- Aches or pains, headaches, cramps or digestive problems that do not ease even with treatment

Does MDD impact a person's function?

Yes, MDD can prevent a person from functioning normally, impacting relationships with the patient's family, friends and colleagues.

- Overall, approximately 80% of persons with moderate/severe depression report some level of functional impairment due to their depression.
- 27% report serious difficulties in work and home life. And those with more severe disease have significantly more functional impairment.

What is the cause of MDD?

Although the cause of MDD is not known, medical experts believe that deficiencies in neurotransmission in the brain, including transmission of serotonin and norepinephrine, can contribute to the development of MDD.

- A shortage of these neurotransmitters is thought to be linked to important emotional and physical symptoms of depression that can cause difficulty functioning in everyday life.

Treatment of MDD

- According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, 90% of people diagnosed with MDD can be effectively treated.
- Nearly 50% of people with MDD do not receive treatment.
- The APA guidelines recommend SNRIs, SSRIs, mirtazapine and bupropion as initial treatment options for MDD patients.
- Many treatment options are available and the type that works best depends on the individual and the severity and pattern of the person's illness.

What is the clinical impact of MDD?

- MDD is one of the most common mental disorders in the United States.
- MDD affects almost 16 million people in the U.S. every year, with a range of severity from mild to severe.
- MDD is a leading individual contributor to disability worldwide- more disabling than any other chronic disorder, including ischemic heart disease, alcohol use disorders, COPD, lung cancer, adult onset hearing loss, Alzheimer's dementia, or cerebrovascular disease.

What is the economic impact of MDD?

- Depression is a lifelong liability for millions of people. And as a result, it is a national economic burden, with total costs estimated at \$83 billion per year.
- It is estimated that depressed people lose 5.6 hours of productive work every week. In any 30-day period, depressed workers use 1.5 to 3.2 more short-term disability days.