

# Module 9: Psychological Disorders and Treatment

## Topic 3 Content: Types of Depression Notes

### Introduction



TYPES  
OF  
DEPRESSION

whro  
EDUCATION

Click each image to learn more about various types of depression.

Major Depression

Dysthymia

Bipolar

SAD

### Types of Depression

Click each image to learn more about the various types of depression.

# Module 9: Psychological Disorders and Treatment

## Topic 3 Content: Types of Depression Notes

### Major Depression

Major Depression

- Symptoms are severe

Click each marker to learn more about this disorder.

- i* Causes
- i* Diagnosis

Major Depression    Dysthymia    Bipolar    SAD

A person diagnosed with major depression has many severe symptoms

#### Symptoms

Symptoms are severe and the depression affects daily functioning. Moreover, the depression is disabling and interferes with a person's job, activities, and relationships. Suicidal thoughts are more common with this type of depression.

#### Diagnosis

In order to receive a diagnosis of major depression, a patient must experience the severe symptoms consistently for at least two weeks.

# Module 9: Psychological Disorders and Treatment

## Topic 3 Content: Types of Depression Notes

### Dysthymia



The infographic features the word "Dysthymia" in a large, blue, handwritten-style font at the top. Below it, a bullet point states: "Symptoms are less severe than with major depression". A line of text reads: "Click each marker to learn more about this disorder." Below this are five blue circular icons with white lowercase 'i' characters, each followed by a label: "Symptoms", "Diagnosis", "Genetics", "Causes", and "Treatments". To the right of this list is a photograph of a young woman with long brown hair, wearing a pink shirt and blue jeans, sitting on a wooden bench with a stack of books on her lap. Below the infographic is a dark blue horizontal bar containing four small square images of people's faces, each with a label underneath: "Major Depression" (a woman looking distressed), "Dysthymia" (the same woman from the photo above), "Bipolar" (a smiling man), and "SAD" (a woman wearing a winter hat).

Compared to major depression, dysthymia is a less severe form of depression.

#### Symptoms

Symptoms are usually chronic and long term but not as disabling. For example, people with dysthymia typically are able to continue daily activities, but feel “down” much of the time. This milder form of depression often goes unnoticed by these individuals and by those around them.

#### Diagnosis

According to the DSM, a diagnosis of depression is made if a person experiences a continuously depressed mood for at least two years.

#### Genetics

A strong genetic link for depression exists. For example, if one identical twin has depression, there is a fifty percent chance the other twin will as well.

#### Causes

PET brain scans reveal that the brain's frontal lobe is less active when someone has depression. In addition, many mental health professionals believe that neurotransmitters play a huge role in depression. Likewise, people with depression have low levels of both serotonin and norepinephrine.

#### Treatment

Anti-depressants are taken in an attempt to restore these neurotransmitters to their proper levels.

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## Topic 3 Content: Types of Depression Notes

### Bipolar Disorder

**Bipolar Disorder**

- Marked by mood swings
  - *Mania* is a high
  - *Depression* is a low

Click each marker to learn more about this disorder.

- i** Episodes
- i** Symptoms
- i** Genetics

Major Depression    Dysthymia    **Bipolar**    SAD

Bipolar disorder is another type of mood disorder. It used to be called manic-depression. This disorder is marked by mood swings in which someone experiences “highs” called mania, with alternating “lows” of depression.

#### Episodes

Every episode of mania and depression varies greatly, and can alternate anywhere between a matter of hours, days, or several weeks.

#### Symptoms

Mania is characterized by rapid speech, racing thoughts, risky or dangerous behavior, extreme happiness, unusual irritability, hyperactivity, and little sleep. This impulsive behavior can lead to unwise and illogical decisions, such as spending sprees or risky relationships. The mania is then eventually followed by an alternating mood with depressive symptoms. Someone can be symptom free for up to three years and experience normal moods between episodes.

#### Genetics

Bipolar also has a genetic link. Children of a parent with bipolar disorder have a twenty-five percent chance of getting the condition as well. Likewise, twin studies reveal an identical twin has a seventy percent chance of developing bipolar symptoms if the other identical twin has it.

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### Seasonal Affective Disorder

**Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)**

- Depression related to time of year

Click each marker to learn more about this disorder.

- [i Causes](#)
- [i Symptoms](#)

Major Depression    Dysthymia    Bipolar    SAD

Seasonal affective disorder is depression related to a time of year, specifically fall or winter when the days become shorter.

#### Causes

During these months, less daylight prompts higher levels of melatonin in the body. Up to five percent of the population, especially in the northern states, suffers from the winter blues.

#### Symptoms

People with seasonal affective disorder become fatigued and drowsy for much of the day, and begin to experience many of the common symptoms of depression. People who develop seasonal affective disorder often gain weight during colder months, due to overeating and excessive sleeping.