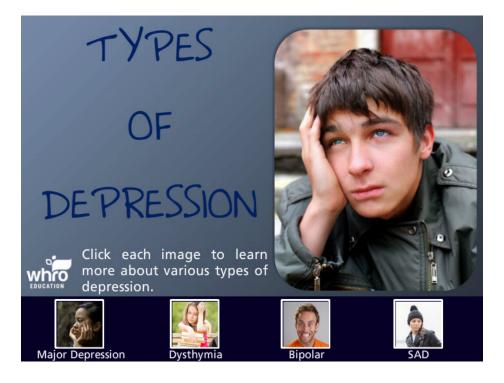
Module 9: Psychological Disorders and Treatment Topic 3 Content: Types of Depression Notes

Introduction



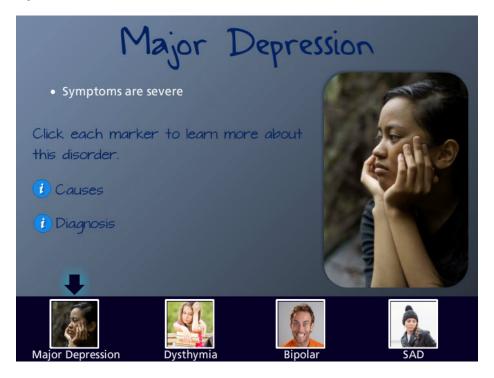
Types of Depression

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



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



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.



Module 9: Psychological Disorders and Treatment Topic 3 Content: Types of Depression Notes

Bipolar Disorder



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.



Module 9: Psychological Disorders and Treatment Topic 3 Content: Types of Depression Notes

Seasonal Affective Disorder



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.

