

Adopting a Holistic Approach to the Management of Major Depressive Disorder (MDD)



Major depressive disorder (MDD) can potentially cause severe and debilitating symptoms that can significantly impact a patient's emotional well-being, thoughts, and daily activities. Therefore, treatment for depression typically involves a combination of medication and psychotherapy. For mild depression, psychotherapy alone can be an effective first-line treatment, with medication added if necessary. However, for moderate to severe depression, it is recommended to initiate a combination of psychotherapy and medication to provide optimal relief. In addition, brain stimulation therapy may be considered if conventional interventions fail to alleviate symptoms.

Patients can actively participate in their treatment journey by implementing self-care techniques to manage their MDD effectively. Discover how a patient can adopt a holistic approach to managing their MDD and be empowered with the tools for effective self-care.

WHAT ARE SOME EFFECTIVE SELF-CARE TECHNIQUES TO MANAGE MDD?

1. PHYSICAL ACTIVITY:

Engaging in physical activity, like walking, for at least 30 minutes a day can improve mood.



2. SLEEP: Establish a consistent sleep schedule by going to bed and waking up at the same time every day.

3. NUTRITION: Consume nutritious meals regularly.



4. GET ORGANIZED:

Prioritize tasks based on their urgency and importance, and work on them at your own pace. Delay making significant life choices until you are in a better emotional state.



5. RELATIONSHIPS: Make an effort to reach out and connect with others, and have open conversations with people you trust about your emotions and how you're doing.

6. SUBSTANCE USE: Avoid using alcohol, nicotine, drugs, and medications not prescribed for you.



HOW CAN I HELP A LOVED ONE GRAPPLING WITH DEPRESSION?

1. BE ENCOURAGING: Show your support by providing encouragement, empathy, and patience. Reassure them that with time and proper treatment, their depression can improve. Assist them in staying committed to their treatment plan to maximize its effectiveness.



2. ENGAGE THEM IN OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES: Suggest fun activities like walks, outings, and other physical activities that you can enjoy together.

3. BE A HELPFUL HAND: Offer a helping hand wherever needed, whether it's assisting with essential tasks like providing transportation to appointments, or offering gentle reminders for them to take their medications. Together you can make an impact on their treatment journey.



References

1. Depression. National Institute of Mental Health. Revised 2021. Accessed April 26, 2023. <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/depression>

This handout is intended for your education and is not intended to replace a clinical evaluation by a health care provider. This is not a diagnostic tool.