

Untreated Depression and Its Effects On The Body & Mind

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What is Depression?

- Major depressive disorder (MDD) has been ranked as the third cause of the burden of disease worldwide in 2008 by WHO, which has projected that this disease will rank first by 2030.
- It is diagnosed when an individual has a persistently low or depressed mood, anhedonia or decreased interest in pleasurable activities, feelings of guilt or worthlessness, lack of energy, poor concentration, appetite changes, psychomotor retardation or agitation, sleep disturbances, or suicidal thoughts.

How is it classified

- Per DSM-5, other types of depression falling under the category of depressive disorders are:
 - Persistent depressive disorder, formerly known as dysthymia
 - Disruptive mood dysregulation disorder
 - Premenstrual dysphoric disorder
 - Substance/medication-induced depressive disorder
 - Depressive disorder due to another medical condition
 - Unspecified depressive disorder

Prognosis

- Untreated depressive episodes in major depressive disorder can last from 6 to 12 months.
- About two-thirds of the individuals with MDD contemplate suicide, and about 10 to 15 percent commit suicide.
- MDD is a chronic, recurrent illness; the recurrence rate is about 50% after the first episode, 70% after the second episode, and 90% after the third episode.
- About 5 to 10 percent of the patients with MDD eventually develop bipolar disorder.
- The prognosis of MDD is good in patients with mild episodes, the absence of psychotic symptoms, better treatment compliance, a strong support system, and good premorbid functioning.
- The prognosis is poor in the presence of a comorbid psychiatric disorder, personality disorder, multiple hospitalizations, and advanced age of onset.

Complications

- MDD is one of the leading causes of disability worldwide.
- It not only causes a severe functional impairment but also adversely affects the interpersonal relationships, thus lowering the quality of life.
- Individuals with MDD are at a high risk of developing comorbid anxiety disorders and substance use disorders, which further increases their risk of suicide.
- Depression can aggravate medical comorbidities such as diabetes, hypertension, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and coronary artery disease.
- Depressed individuals are at high risk of developing self-destructive behavior as a coping mechanism.
- MDD is often very debilitating if left untreated.

Physical Effects on The Body

- chronic pain
- chronic inflammation
- headaches or migraines
- cramps
- constipation or diarrhea
- nausea and vomiting
- chronic fatigue that doesn't go away after resting
- changes in sleep patterns
- changes in weight
- changes in appetite
- decreased sex drive or dyspareunia (pain during sex)
- increased chance of autoimmune disorders

Psychosocial Effects

- loss of interest in previously enjoyable activities or hobbies
- harder time concentrating on your tasks
- feeling frustrated, restless, or irritable without any apparent reason
- persistent anxiety or sadness that's not necessarily connected to a specific event
- feeling helpless, vulnerable, guilty, or worthless
- having a pessimistic or hopeless outlook on your life
- difficulty with decision-making

Don't Want This to
Happen to You

**REACH OUT
AND GET
HELP, YOU
ARE WORTH
IT!!**

References

- <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK559078/>
- <https://psychcentral.com/depression/side-effects-of-untreated-depression-what-to-look-for#physical-effects>