

# Treatment Resistant Depression

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# What is Depression

- Depression is a medical illness of the brain
- It affects:
  - Mood and emotions
  - Energy and motivation
  - Sleep and appetite
  - Thinking and concentration
- Symptoms can last weeks, months, or longer
  - Persistent sadness or emptiness
  - Loss of interest or pleasure
  - Fatigue or low energy
  - Changes in sleep or appetite
  - Feelings of guilt or worthlessness
  - Difficulty concentrating

# How Depression Is Treated

- Antidepressant medications
- Psychotherapy (talk therapy)
- Lifestyle supports
- Many people need **adjustments over time**

# What is Treatment Resistant Depression (TRD)

- Depression symptoms that do not go away after
  - Correct dose
  - Correct duration ( $>8$  weeks)
  - Trail of 2 different types of medication
- Treatment resistant does NOT mean untreatable
- Associated with:
  - Increased suicide risk
  - Functional impairment
- Occurs in 1 in 3 people with depression
- Most people respond with right combination of therapy

# Things That May Mimic TRD

1. Not consistently taking medications
2. Incorrect dosing or duration
3. Wrong diagnosis:
  - a. Bipolar disorder
  - b. Substance use disorder
  - c. Personality disorder
4. Outside stressors
5. Other untreated medical conditions

# Medication Options for TRD

- Changing to a different antidepressant
- Adjusting the dose
- Combining medications
- Adding medications that can support energy

# Non-Medication Treatments for TRD

Psychotherapy can help with:

- Thought patterns
- Coping skills
- Stress management

Lifestyle support with:

- Sleep regulation
- Physical activity
- Nutrition
- Reducing alcohol or substances
- Social connection

# Stay in the Loop With Your Provider

## Ask Questions

- What options haven't we tried yet?
- What are benefits and risks?
- What goals matter most to me?

# Resources

## **1. Johns Hopkins Medicine**

Johns Hopkins Medicine. (n.d.). *Treatment-resistant depression*. Retrieved December 14, 2025, from <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/mood-disorders/treatment-resistant-depression>

## **2. American Association of Psychiatric Pharmacists (AAPP)**

American Association of Psychiatric Pharmacists. (n.d.). *Patient resources: Treatment-resistant depression*. Retrieved December 14, 2025, from <https://aapp.org/resource/patients/trd>