

DEPRESSION



Centurion
UNIVERSITY

Shaping Lives...
Empowering Communities...

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INTRODUCTION:

Depression is a mental health disorder characterized by persistent feelings of sadness, hopelessness, and a lack of interest or pleasure in activities. It can affect a person's mood, thoughts, behaviour, and physical health. Depression is a common condition that can occur at any age and can significantly impact a person's quality of life.

ETIOLOGY:

- **Biological factors:** Depression can be caused by imbalances in the chemicals in the brain that regulate mood, such as serotonin and dopamine. Genetics may also play a role in depression.
- **Life events:** Traumatic or stressful events, such as the death of a loved one, a divorce, financial problems, or job loss, can trigger depression.
- **Medical conditions:** Depression can be a symptom of medical conditions such as chronic pain, thyroid disorders, or autoimmune diseases.
- **Substance abuse:** Alcohol and drug abuse can lead to depression.
- **Hormonal changes:** Hormonal changes during pregnancy, postpartum, or menopause can cause depression.
- **Social isolation:** Social isolation and loneliness can lead to depression.

- **Childhood trauma:** Traumatic experiences in childhood, such as abuse or neglect, can increase the risk of depression later in life.
- **Personality factors:** Certain personality traits, such as low self-esteem or a tendency toward negativity, can increase the risk of depression.

PATHOPHYSIOLOGY:

Depression is a complex condition that affects the body and the brain. While the exact biological mechanisms that lead to depression are not fully understood, there are several factors that can contribute to its development.

Neurotransmitter imbalances: Neurotransmitters are chemicals in the brain that regulate mood, motivation, and other important functions. In depression, there may be an imbalance of certain neurotransmitters, such as serotonin and dopamine, that can lead to symptoms of depression.

Hormonal changes: Hormones such as cortisol, which is released in response to stress, can also play a role in depression. Chronic stress and elevated cortisol levels can interfere with neurotransmitter function and contribute to depression.

Inflammation: Inflammation is the body's natural response to injury or infection, but chronic inflammation has been linked to depression. Inflammatory cytokines can disrupt neurotransmitter function and contribute to depressive symptoms.

Genetic factors: There may be a genetic component to depression, as studies have shown that depression can run in families.

Structural changes in the brain: Depression has been associated with changes in the structure and function of the brain, particularly in the prefrontal cortex, hippocampus, and amygdala.

CLINICAL MANIFESTATION:

- Persistent sad, anxious, or "empty" mood
- Loss of interest or pleasure in activities once enjoyed
- Feelings of hopelessness or pessimism

- Irritability
- Fatigue or loss of energy
- Changes in appetite or weight
- Sleep disturbances, such as insomnia or sleeping too much
- Difficulty concentrating or making decisions
- Feelings of guilt or worthlessness
- Physical symptoms such as headaches or stomach aches
- Withdrawal from social activities or relationships
- Thoughts of death or suicide

DIGNOSIS:

- **Physical Examination**
- **Medical History & Medical history**
- **Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM):** The DSM is a widely used diagnostic manual that outlines the criteria for diagnosing depression.
- **Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9) :** It consists of nine questions that ask about the frequency and severity of depressive symptoms over the past two weeks.
- **Beck Depression Inventory (BDI):**) It consists of 21 questions that ask about symptoms such as sadness, guilt, and loss of interest in activities.
- **Hamilton Rating Scale for Depression (HAM-D):** It consists of 21 questions that ask about symptoms such as depressed mood, insomnia, and agitation.
- **Clinical interview:** A mental health professional may conduct a clinical interview to assess for depression.

PHARM ACOLOGICAL MANAGEMENT:

- **Selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs):** They work by increasing the levels of serotonin in the brain. Examples include fluoxetine (Prozac), sertraline (Zoloft), and citalopram (Celexa).

- **Serotonin-norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors (SNRIs):** SNRIs work by increasing the levels of serotonin and norepinephrine in the brain. Examples include venlafaxine (Effexor) and duloxetine (Cymbalta).
- **Tricyclic antidepressants (TCAs):** TCAs are an older class of antidepressants that are less commonly prescribed due to their side effects. They work by increasing the levels of serotonin and norepinephrine in the brain. Examples include amitriptyline (Elavil) and imipramine (Tofranil).
- **Monoamine oxidase inhibitors (MAOIs):** MAOIs are an older class of antidepressants that are also less commonly prescribed due to their side effects and interactions with other medications and foods. They work by inhibiting the breakdown of certain neurotransmitters in the brain. Examples include phenelzine (Nardil) and tranylcypromine (Parnate).

NON- PHARMACOLOGICAL MANAGEMENT/PREVENTION:

- **Stay physically active:** Regular exercise has been shown to have a positive effect on mood and can help reduce the risk of depression.
- **Eat a healthy diet:** Eating a balanced diet that is rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins may help reduce the risk of depression.
- **Get enough sleep:** Adequate sleep is important for overall health and well-being. Getting enough sleep can help reduce the risk of depression.
- **Manage stress:** Chronic stress can contribute to the development of depression. Learning healthy coping mechanisms such as meditation, yoga, or deep breathing can help manage stress and reduce the risk of depression.
- **Stay connected:** Maintaining social connections with friends and family can help reduce feelings of isolation and loneliness, which can contribute to the development of depression.

- **Seek help when needed:** If you are experiencing symptoms of depression, it is important to seek help from a mental health professional. Treatment for depression can be highly effective, and early intervention can help prevent the condition from worsening.