



Major Depressive Episode

As defined in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders.

- A.** Five (or more) of the following symptoms have been present during the same 2-week period and represent a change from previous functioning; at least one of the symptoms is either (1) depressed mood (2) loss of interest or pleasure. Note: Do not include symptoms that are clearly due to a general medical condition, or mood-incongruent delusions or hallucinations.
- (1) Depressed mood most of the day, nearly every day, as indicated by either subjective report (e.g., feels sad or empty) or observation made by others (e.g., appears tearful). Note: In children and adolescents, can be irritable mood.
 - (2) Markedly diminished interest or pleasure in all, or almost all, activities most of the day, nearly every day (as indicated by either subjective account or observation made by others)
 - (3) Significant weight loss when not dieting or weight gain (e.g., a change of more than 5% of body weight in a month), or decrease or increase in appetite nearly every day. Note: In children, consider failure to make expected weight gains.
 - (4) Insomnia or hypersomnia nearly every day
 - (5) Psychomotor agitation or retardation nearly every day (observable by others, not merely subjective feelings of restlessness or being slowed down)
 - (6) Fatigue or loss of energy nearly every day
 - (7) Feelings of worthlessness or excessive or inappropriate guilt (which may be delusional) nearly every day (not merely self-reproach or guilt about being sick)
 - (8) Diminished ability to think or concentrate, or indecisiveness, nearly every day (either by subjective account or as observed by others)
 - (9) Recurrent thoughts of death (not just fear of dying), recurrent suicidal ideation without a specific plan, or a suicide attempt or a specific plan for committing suicide
- B.** The symptoms do not meet criteria for a Mixed Episode.
- C.** The symptoms cause clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning.
- D.** The symptoms are not due to the direct physiological effects of a substance (e.g., a drug of abuse, a medication) or a general medical condition (e.g., hypothyroidism).
- E.** The symptoms are not better accounted for by Bereavement, i.e., after a loss of a loved one, the symptoms persist for longer than 2 months or are characterized by marked functional impairment, morbid preoccupation with worthlessness, suicidal ideation, psychotic symptoms, or psychomotor retardation.

A simple way to remember the signs of depression

- D** – Definite personality change (defiant, disagreeable, distant or disorganized)
- U** – Underachieving (grades fall As to Cs in one semester, avoids school)
- M** – Morbid preoccupation, dwells on death and disaster, voices suicidal thinking, self-destructive
- P** – Pessimism and/or psychosis ... grim, no joy
- S** – Somatic complaints without physical basis

Other Available Resources To Investigate:

Adolescent Depression Awareness Program (ADAP): http://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/Psychiatry/moods/outreach_adap/

Suicide Prevention West Virginia: <http://preventsuicidewv.org/>

Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255

American Association of Suicidology School Suicide Prevention Accreditation Program: www.suicidology.org

Maine Youth Suicide Prevention Program, A Resource for School Personnel:

<http://www.maine.gov/suicide/professionals/program/index.htm>