

# MENTAL HEALTH SERIES PART THREE

**DEPRESSION**

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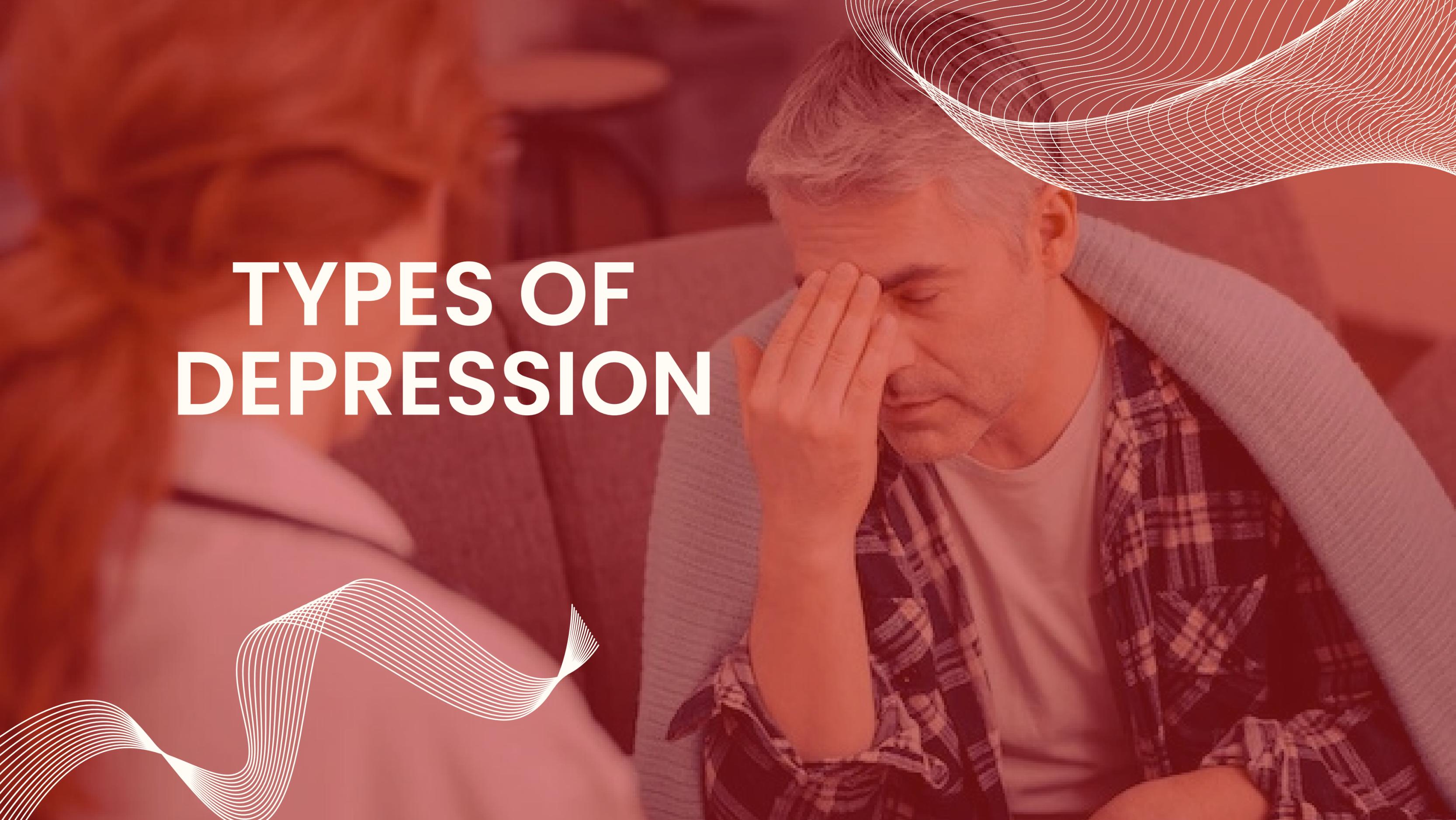
# What is Depression



## DEPRESSION

- This is a mood disorder that causes persistent feelings of sadness, emptiness, and loss of joy. It is different from the mood fluctuations that people regularly experience as a part of life.
- Major life events, such as grief or the loss of a job, can trigger depression. But depression is distinct from the negative feelings a person may temporarily have in response to a difficult life event.
- Depression can last for several weeks, months, or years. For many people, it is a chronic illness that gets better and then relapses.

# TYPES OF DEPRESSION



# **A: MILD DEPRESSION**

- **Mild depression involves depressive symptoms that are considered low-grade.**
  - **People with mild, low-grade depression may not even realize they are depressed.**
  - **However, people with mild depression may still experience many of the same symptoms of more severe depressions including irritability, sadness, and lack of motivation.**
  - **Despite the symptoms being more subtle and less intense, they are noticeable enough to interfere with your daily or usual activities.**
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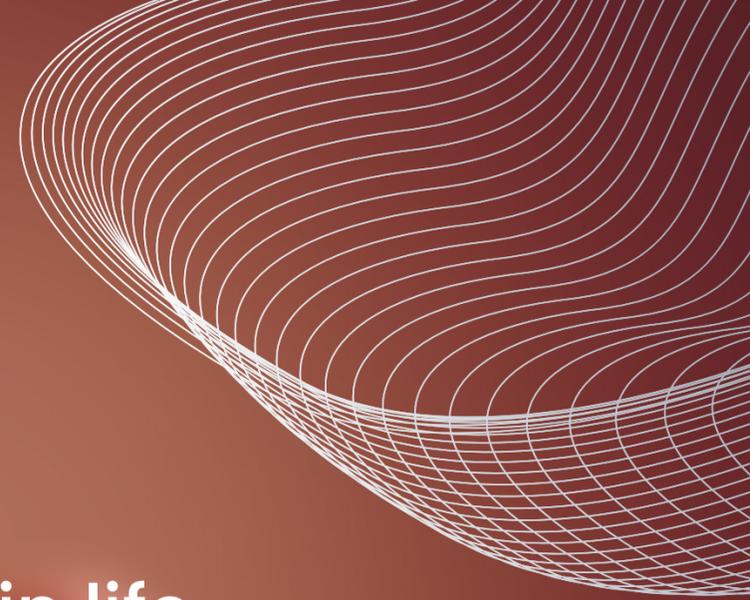
## **B: MODERATE DEPRESSION**

- **Moderate and mild depression share similar symptoms.**

**Additionally, moderate depression may cause problems with self-esteem, reduced productivity, increased sensitivities and excessive worrying.**

- **Moderate depression is easier to diagnose than mild cases because the symptoms are more obvious and can significantly impact your daily life.**

# C: SEVERE/MAJOR DEPRESSION



- This is a mental condition characterized by a persistently depressed mood and long-term loss of pleasure or interest in life, often with other symptoms such as disturbed sleep, and feelings of guilt or inadequacy.
- Major depression may also cause delusions, hallucinations, and suicidal thoughts or behaviours.
- Sometimes severe depression can go away after a while, but it can also be recurrent for some people.

# What Triggers Depression?

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Triggers (causes) are emotional, psychological, or physical events or circumstances that can cause depression symptoms to appear. Major common triggers include;

- **Stressful life events** such as loss, family conflicts, family problems and changes in relationships.
- **Medical conditions** especially a medical crisis such as a new diagnosis or a chronic illness such as heart disease or diabetes.
- **Environmental factors** such as exposure to trauma or lack of social support.

# SIGNS & SYMPTOMS OF DEPRESSION

- Loss of interest in activities

This involves taking less pleasure in hobbies, and other interests that an individual usually enjoys doing such as sports.

- Social Withdrawal

This involves avoiding social situations and losing touch or contact with friends.

- Fatigue/Tiredness

Prolonged fatigue will make daily tasks, such as washing up and getting dressed feel more difficult and take longer.

# SIGNS & SYMPTOMS OF DEPRESSION

- Lack of Concentration and Memory Loss

Depression may make thoughts and speech for a person to be slower. A person may experience a hard time remembering things easily.

- Changes in lifestyle or routine activities

A person is likely to experience changes in their sleep patterns (insomnia) and eating habits that affect their functionality.

- Suicidal thoughts or suicide attempts

This involves having thoughts or ideas about the possibility of ending one's own life

**TASK: Look at the picture and choose the symptoms that best describes the photo.**

**a**

**Depressed mood**

**b**

**Fatigue/Tiredness**

**c**

**Anxiety**



**TASK: Look at the picture and choose the symptoms that best describes the photo.**

**a**

**Body aches and pains**

**b**

**Changes in appetite**

**c**

**Loss of interest in activities**



**TASK: Look at the picture and choose the symptoms that best describes the photo.**

**a**

**Social Withdrawal**

**b**

**Fatigue/Tiredness**

**c**

**Changes in sleep patterns**

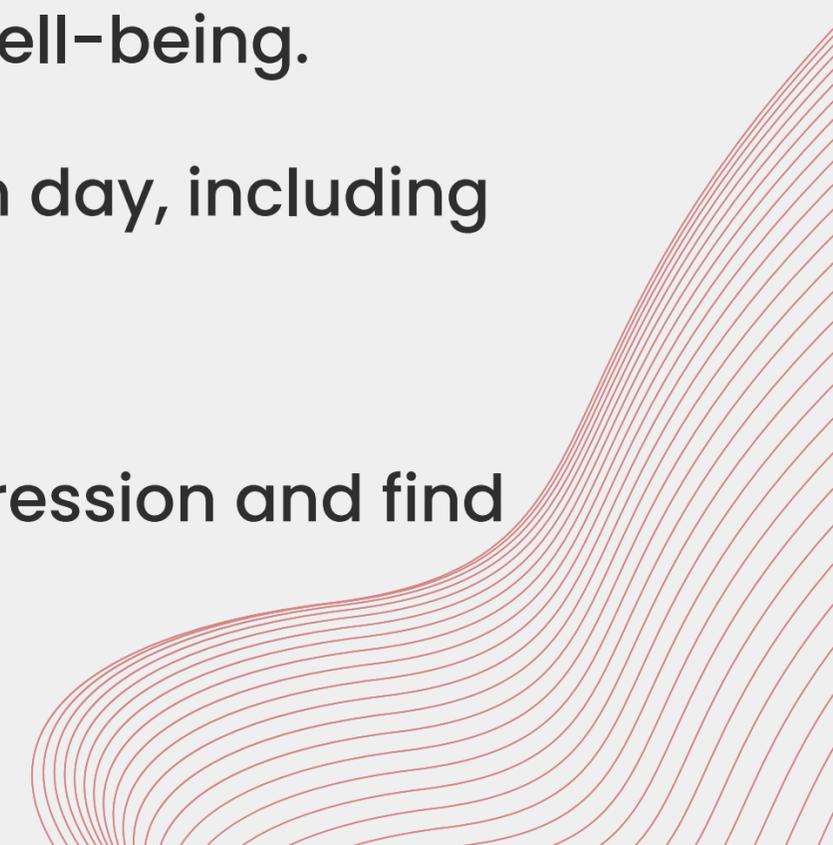




# HOW TO AVOID DEPRESSION



The following tips may help people who have these risk factors or who are living with depression manage or avoid symptoms.

- **Avoid stress**; Getting enough sleep and rest, learning to say “no” to additional demands, taking breaks, practicing breathing exercises and meditation can help.
  - **Exercise**; Physical activity can act as an antidepressant, and doctors encourage it as a treatment.
  - **A healthy diet** may help prevent depression and boost mental well-being.
  - **Have enough sleep**; Go to bed and get up at the same time each day, including weekends.
  - **Talking therapy**; This can help people identify the causes of depression and find practical solutions.
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# TREATING DEPRESSION

## Support

- This can range from discussing practical solutions and possible causes to educating family members.

## Therapy

- This may include one-to-one counselling and cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) that can help fight depressive thoughts.

## Drug Treatment

- Depending on the type of depression one has, a doctor may prescribe medicines such as antidepressants to treat depression.

Using the table below, assess the frequency that you experience these common symptoms of depression.

STATEMENT	ANSWER
I loose interest and motivation to do my daily activities	<u>Sometimes</u>
I am always sad and unhappy	
I feel less energetic and drained everyday	
I feel worthless in my community	
I prefer staying alone than being with people	

Using the table below, assess the frequency that you experience these common symptoms of depression.

STATEMENT	ANSWER
I have a big/small appetite	<u>Sometimes</u>
I always have negative self-image or self-harm thoughts	
I often lack sleep/sleep too much	
I feel no interest in talking to other people	
I have suicidal thoughts/plans	

# THANK YOU

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