

Therapy for Depression or Anxiety Disorders

What Treatments Are Available?

Depression and anxiety disorders can have many combined causes, including family history and life events. Millions of Americans are diagnosed each year with depression or an anxiety disorder – and millions more will suffer from one of these disorders at some point in their lifetime. Your health care provider may recommend medication, talk therapy, a combination of both, or other therapies to help treat your condition.

Medication

Although the exact causes of these conditions are unknown, they may be due to a chemical imbalance in the brain. Therefore, medications that affect this chemical imbalance may play a role in treating these disorders. Talk with your doctor about medications that are used to treat these disorders.

Talk therapy

Talk therapy (psychotherapy) helps you work toward changing the way you view the world around you and how you react to it. Talking with a psychiatrist or another qualified health care professional can help you explore

your relationships, feelings, and experiences in a meaningful way to help you interact with others again.

Other treatments

In the treatment of depression or anxiety disorders, various stress reduction techniques, such as biofeedback, exercise, and meditation, are often also recommended.

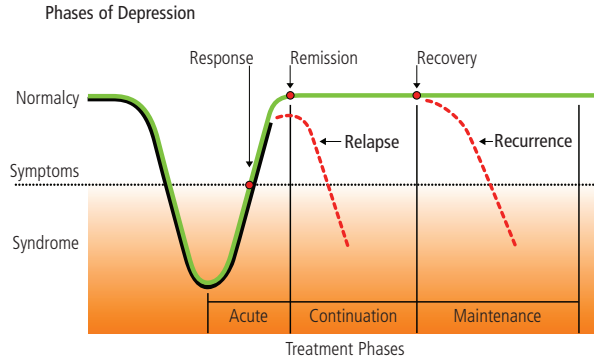


No two people have the same symptoms. The goal of treatment is to virtually eliminate the depression or anxiety symptoms you may be experiencing and keep them from returning.

With proper treatment, it is possible to reduce the chance of symptoms returning. However, if left untreated, the condition can become chronic (lasting for a long time). Therefore, it is important to work with your doctor to find the right treatment for you.

Staying on Track with Therapy

- Depression and anxiety can begin to go away and then return. The graph below shows how this cycle can occur with depression. To **avoid relapsing**, keep working with your health care provider to adjust, maintain, or discontinue your therapy.
- Some people consider the first few months of therapy to be the most challenging. But patients who stick with their prescribed course of treatment are more likely to achieve remission.
- If you are prescribed medication, do not stop taking it without talking with your health care provider first. Symptoms can occur when people stop using their medication, especially when they suddenly stop therapy. Your health care provider may want to slowly decrease your dose to help avoid these kinds of symptoms.
- Keep a personal journal of your feelings, sleep patterns, and other activities. This may make it easier to keep track of how you're responding to medication. Share this information with your doctor.



“Self-medication” is self-defeating. Relieving the symptoms of depression or anxiety can be a challenge. Why would you do anything to make it harder? Self-medicating with alcohol or drugs will ultimately keep you from getting to where you want to be.

You may also find helpful information at these links:

National Alliance on Mental Illness

www.nami.org

Mental Health America

www.mentalhealthamerica.net

Wyeth
Neuroscience

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