

For People With Major Depressive Disorder (MDD)

A Few Tips on Talking With Your Doctor

This resource is provided to you as an educational resource. It is not intended as, nor is it a replacement for, medical advice and/or treatment from your doctor.

Communication is important

Good communication is vital in the treatment of major depressive disorder (MDD). It is important that you tell your doctor as much as you can about your health and the way you feel. You also need to feel comfortable asking your doctor questions you may have about your MDD symptoms and treatment.

Make a list of questions ahead of time.

Bring it with you when you see your doctor.

The following topics should also be included in the discussion.

Other health conditions you have

Be sure your doctor knows if you have other health conditions, such as heart disease, diabetes, cancer, and/or asthma, as they may affect your MDD or your MDD treatment.

You may want to ask your doctor the following questions:

- Should I be concerned about how other medical conditions may affect my MDD?
- Can my MDD impact other medical conditions?
- What can I do to improve my physical and mental health?

If you're a woman, let your doctor know if you become or plan to become pregnant.



Talk to your doctor if you have other health conditions, as they may affect your MDD treatment.

Talking With Your Doctor



Keeping a journal may help you and your doctor develop a treatment plan.

Symptoms and feelings you have

Describing your symptoms and feelings may help your doctor know how your treatment is working.

Consider what the day is like for you:

- Are you eating well?
- Are you having trouble falling asleep, staying asleep, or are you sleeping too much?
- Do you have any physical pains?
- Do you have any other physical problems?

Your doctor will want to know about all of this.

Consider how you are feeling emotionally:

- How are you getting along with friends, family, or coworkers?
- How is your mood?
- Do you feel better or worse than you did when you last saw your doctor?

Keep notes or track your activities using a journal to help you remember from day to day. How you feel over time is very important. If you're not feeling better, it is important for your doctor to know.

Medicines you are taking

Medicines should be taken exactly as your doctor prescribed. So it's important to understand how and when to take them. Always talk to your doctor before you stop taking your medicines for any reason.

Ask your doctor for more information on how to take your medicines exactly as he or she ordered:

- Should I take my MDD medicines with or without food?
- Does the time of day I take my medicines matter?
- What are the side effects I might have while taking my medicines?
- Is it okay to drive while taking my medicines?

Let your doctor know if you have trouble paying for your medicines. There may be options available.



Treatment side effects that may affect you

Sometimes, medicines you take for MDD may cause you to feel drowsy or sleepy. This may make it hard to enjoy the benefits of the medicines you take for MDD.

Talk to your doctor if you have been taking medicines for MDD and your symptoms have not improved or you have bothersome side effects.

Life events may be challenging

Life is full of challenges and it may be harder to cope with them when you have MDD.

Life events may include:

- Loss of a loved one
- Marriage or relationship trouble
- Money problems, loss of a job, or rising debts

If you are facing any of these, let your doctor know.

Ask your doctor about what to expect when taking medicines for MDD.

Talk to your doctor if you have side effects or your MDD symptoms don't improve.

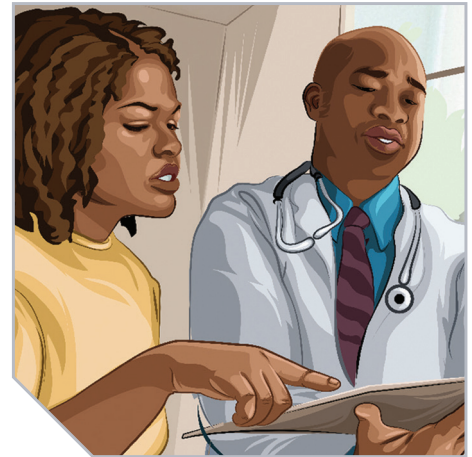
Questions you may have for your doctor

There may be other things you will want to talk about when you see your doctor. These can be anything that you think is important. Keep a running list of any questions you may have in your day-to-day life. Take this list to your next office visit and talk to your doctor about any concerns you may have.

If Your Symptoms Are Getting Worse

If your actions are potentially harmful to yourself or other people, tell someone who can help right away:

- Call your doctor's office
- Call 911 for emergency services
- Go to the nearest hospital emergency room
- Call the toll-free, 24-hour hotline of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255 to be connected to a trained counselor



Remember, it's a partnership.

Patients and doctors are vital partners in the treatment of MDD. Work with your doctor. Share the information that will help him or her help you.

**And don't be afraid to ask questions.
After all, it's your health.**