

PERSISTENT DEPRESSIVE DISORDER (DYSTHYMIA)



MDAM
MOOD DISORDERS
ASSOCIATION OF MANITOBA
WESTMAN

Helping People Help Themselves

Compiled by 2023 Green Team

What is Persistent Depressive Disorder (PDD)?

Persistent Depressive Disorder is a form of depression that persists over time. You may experience sadness and emptiness, lose interest in daily activities, and have difficulty completing tasks. You may also experience diminished self-esteem, failure, and hopelessness. These sensations may persist for years and interfere with your relationships, school, and work. Even on joyful occasions, those with persistent depressive disorder may find it difficult to maintain a positive attitude. You may be described as having a gloomy personality, being unable to enjoy yourself, or perpetually complaining. (Mayo Clinic, 2018).

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Symptoms

PDD symptoms are comparable to depression symptoms. The main distinction is that PDD is a chronic condition, with symptoms occurring on most days for at least two years.

These symptoms may include:

- depression almost every day for most of the day
- having a poor appetite or overeating
- difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep
- low energy or fatigue
- low self-esteem
- poor concentration or difficulty making decisions
- feelings of hopelessness

(Gabbey, 2012)

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Causes

Like other disorders, the exact cause of PDD is unknown. Certain factors may contribute to the development of the condition, such as:

- Serious medical conditions, like diabetes and cancer
- Personal or family history of depression
- Trauma or chronic stress
- Certain types medications that can cause depression as a side effect
- Biochemical imbalance

(Zambon, 2020)

Complications

- Substance misuse
- Personality disorder
- Lower quality of life
- School or work problems and trouble getting thing done
- Anxiety disorder

(Mayo Clinic, 2018)

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Risk Factors

Persistent depressive disorder typically begins in childhood, adolescence, or early adulthood and lasts for a long time. Certain risk factors appear to increase the likelihood of developing persistent depressive disorder. (Mayo Clinic, 2018)

- Having a first-degree blood relative with major depressive disorder or other depressive disorders, such as a parent or sibling.
- Events that are traumatic or stressful, such as the death of a loved one or significant financial problems.
- Negative personality traits, such as low self-esteem, excessive dependence or self-criticism, and an incessant expectation of the worst.
- Histories of additional mental health disorders, such as personality disorder.

(Mayo Clinic, 2018)

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Difference Between PDD and Depression

PPD is a type of depression lasting at least two or more years. In contrast, Major depressive disorder (MDD) is characterized by severe depressive episodes that are separated by at least two months.

PPD and MDD, while similar and sometimes diagnosed together, are distinct conditions.

A PPD diagnosis necessitates the presence of at least two PDD symptoms and depression or irritability that has lasted at least two years. A diagnosis of MDD requires at least five symptoms of severe depression, with at least two months between each episode. (Zambon, 2020)

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Prevention and What Might Help

As there is no sure way to prevent persistent depressive disorder, identifying children at risk of the condition may help them get early treatment. Other strategies include:

- Take steps to control stress, to increase your ability to recover from problems
- Reach out to family and friends
- Get treatment at the earliest sign of a problem to help prevent symptoms from worsening.
- Consider getting long-term treatment to help prevent a relapse of symptoms.

(Mayo Clinic, 2018)

When To See a Doctor

Seek medical assistance if you exhibit any symptoms of persistent depressive disorder.

Discuss your symptoms with your health care provider or seek assistance from a mental health professional. (Mayo Clinic, 2018)

References

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