
Diagnosing Depression Cheat Sheet

Last updated March 2024

- **Major depression**
 - Depressed mood + SIGECAPS (4 of 8)
 - SIGECAPS: sleep, interest, guilt, energy, concentration, appetite, psychomotor, suicide
- **Bipolar depression (use mood stabilizers/antipsychotics)**
 - Depression plus history of mania or hypomania
- **Depression with mixed manic features (use antidepressant plus mood stabilizer/antipsychotic)**
 - Depression plus three of:
 - Elevated mood
 - Grandiosity
 - More talkative
 - Flight of ideas
 - Increased energy
 - Excessively active in an impulsive way
 - Decreased need for sleep
- **Melancholic depression (consider tricyclic antidepressants)**
 - One of the following:
 - Anhedonia
 - Lack of mood reactivity
 - And at least three of the following:
 - Early morning awakening
 - Worse mood in the morning
 - Excessive guilt
 - Depression that is subjectively different from grief or loss
 - Severe weight loss or loss of appetite
 - Psychomotor agitation or retardation
- **Atypical depression (consider MAOIs)**
 - Mood reactivity (mood brightens in response to positive events)
 - Two or more of the following:
 - Increased appetite or weight gain
 - Hypersomnia
 - Leaden paralysis; ask: “Do you get so depressed that you feel too tired to even move?”
 - Rejection sensitivity; ask: “When you get disappointed or rejected, does that really affect you or are you able to shrug it off?”
- **Psychotic depression (consider antipsychotics/ECT)**
 - Delusions, often of a paranoid or nihilistic nature, with themes typically about personal inadequacy, guilt, disease, death or deserved punishment
 - Hallucinations of voices putting one down, saying disparaging or critical things
- **Ruminative depression (consider SSRIs/Cognitive Behavior therapy)**
 - Persistent, intrusive thoughts, typically about personal inadequacies, regrets, and worries about the future.