

# Mood & Anxiety Disorders

**5**

**million Canadians aged 15 or older met diagnostic criteria for a mood, anxiety or substance use disorder in 2022.<sup>1</sup>**

**2x**

**The number of Canadians with mood and/or anxiety disorders has almost doubled in the last 10 years.<sup>1</sup>**



**1 in 3 individuals with a mood, anxiety or substance use disorder report unmet or partially met mental health care needs.<sup>1</sup>**

## What are mood & anxiety disorders?

Mental health encompasses your emotional, psychological and social well-being that determines how you think, feel and behave. Many people will struggle with mental health challenges at some point in their lives, however some people will experience symptoms that are more severe, last for prolonged periods or significantly interfere with their day-to-day functioning. These people may meet criteria for a mental health disorder.

Mood disorders are a group of conditions characterized by an inconsistent or distorted emotional state that interferes with daily functioning. Major depressive disorder, bipolar disorder, seasonal affective disorder and premenstrual dysphoric disorder (PMDD) are all different types of mood disorders. Anxiety disorders are a group of conditions involving feelings of anxiety or panic that interfere with daily life. Generalized anxiety disorder, panic disorder, social anxiety disorder and phobia-related disorders are all examples.

This fact sheet will focus on major depressive disorder and generalized anxiety disorder commonly referred to as simply depression and anxiety respectively.

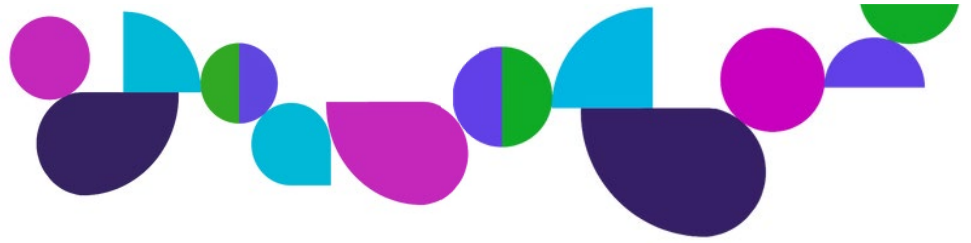
**Prevalence of mood and anxiety disorders is highest among young women in Canada.<sup>1</sup>**

## Mental health in women

Women are 2x more likely to be diagnosed with depression and anxiety disorders.<sup>2</sup>

Women face unique social stressors and inequalities that can greatly impact their mental wellbeing. Gender discrimination, domestic violence, sexual abuse, pregnancy and hormonal fluctuations are all specific mental health-related risk factors that affect women disproportionately. For example, up to 50% of women will experience anxiety and/or depressive symptoms secondary to menopause.<sup>3</sup>

For women from marginalized communities or with different backgrounds, sexual orientations, or gender identities, these stressors are compounded by discrimination, racism and lack of access to reliable information and care.



## Symptoms

### Major Depressive Disorder (MDD)

The symptoms of MDD vary from mild to severe but typically last most of the day, nearly everyday for at least 2 weeks. Possible symptoms include:

- Low mood, feeling sad, empty or hopeless
- Loss of interest in activities that you used to enjoy
- Increase or decrease in appetite
- Difficulty sleeping or sleeping too much
- Low energy and fatigue
- Thoughts of death or suicide

### Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD)

The symptoms as described below must be present most days for 6 months or more to receive a formal diagnosis. Possible symptoms include:

- Persistent worrying about everyday things
- Difficulty controlling worries or feelings of nervousness
- Restlessness or difficulty relaxing
- Difficulty concentrating
- Difficulty sleeping
- Perceiving situations or events as threatening
- Physical symptoms like headache stomachache, shortness of breath, lightheadedness

## Diagnosis

Diagnosis of generalized anxiety disorder and major depressive disorder can be made by your family doctor following discussion of your symptoms. In some cases, additional tests may be conducted to rule out other causes.

## Treatment

Psychotherapy is always recommended in the treatment of generalized anxiety disorder and major depressive disorder. Depending on the severity of your condition, therapy may be self-directed or with a trained psychotherapist or psychologist. In some cases, medication may also be recommended depending on your symptoms. There are many different types of medications for mood and anxiety disorders, speak to your care provider to determine which choice is best for you.

### What is psychotherapy?

Psychotherapy, also known as 'talk therapy', encompasses a broad range of therapy options such as interpersonal psychotherapy, cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), and dialectical behavioural therapy (DBT). Each form of psychotherapy follows a different focus and method. CBT is one of the most common types of psychotherapy that aims to identify and change negative thought patterns and beliefs.



## How can Teladoc Health help?

Our [Mental Health Navigator](#) service helps guide your care journey by connecting you with a psychologist and/or psychiatrist in our network to provide formal assessment and diagnosis. If the recommendations indicate a need for treatment, we can help locate available therapists, social workers, psychologists and psychiatrists in your community. This service is also helpful if you are looking for resources on navigating mental health benefits, coaching and community support.

This guide is not meant to provide medical advice or service and should not be construed as the professional advice of Teladoc Health. As such, Teladoc Health does not guarantee or assume responsibility for the correctness of the information or its applicability regarding any specific factual situation. Personal health problems should be brought to the attention of physicians and appropriate health care professionals.

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