

# Managing Depression and Anxiety

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# Three Important Notes

People can be “depressed” or “anxious” and have very different symptoms and experiences

Symptoms  $\neq$  Diagnoses

A person doesn't need a diagnosis to seek mental health treatment



# Mood and Anxiety "Disorders"



# How common are mood and anxiety disorders among ACHD patients?

- Approximately one-third of ACHD patients experience clinically significant levels of depression or anxiety
- Most of these individuals do not receive mental health treatment

Horner et al, 2000  
Bromberg et al, 2001  
Kovacs et al, 2008



# Common Mood Disorders

## Major Depressive Episode ( $\geq 2$ weeks)

- Depressed mood and/or loss of interest in things you used to enjoy (plus other symptoms)
- Most of the day, nearly every day

## Dysthymia ( $\geq 2$ years)

- Depressed mood most of day, more than half of the time ("more days than not")

## Bipolar Disorder (aka, Manic Depression)

- Includes at least one manic or hypomanic episode



# Common Anxiety Disorders

## Generalized Anxiety ( $\geq$ 6 months)

- Excessive worry that is hard to control
- Other symptoms: feeling restless or "on edge," fatigue, concentration difficulties, increased irritability, tense muscles, sleep problems

## Panic Disorder

- $\geq$  2 episodes with the sudden onset of intense symptoms
- Symptoms: racing heart, sweating, chest pain, shaking, choking sensation, upset stomach, dizziness, tingling, hot flushes/chills, thoughts of losing control/going crazy/dying



# Other Anxiety Disorders

- Social phobia
- Specific phobia (eg, heights, needles)
- Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD)
- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)



# Treatment Options



# Pharmacotherapy (Medications)

- Provided by physicians (usually psychiatrists and family doctors)
- Examples: antidepressant medications, anti-anxiety medications



# Psychotherapy ("Talk Therapy")

- Provided by psychologists, counselors, licensed clinical social workers, psychiatrists, family doctors, nurses
- Different individuals will have different therapeutic approaches/styles (it is important to find someone with whom you feel comfortable talking)



# What Happens in Psychotherapy?

- Emotional support (from someone you're not related to!)
- Specific strategies (tailored to individual)
  - Decision-making and problem-solving
  - Managing negative thoughts
  - Relaxation training
  - Communication skills training
  - Surgical/treatment preparation



Finally, and most importantly, what are your questions or experiences?

