USE THIS GUIDE AS A REFERENCE TOOL TO SCREEN FOR CLINICAL DEPRESSION AND SUICIDE RISK.

RISK FACTORS FOR CLINICAL DEPRESSION

- Previous depressive episode or family history of depression
- Multiple or unexplained physical symptoms
- Chronic pain or chronic illness
- Recent serious loss or stressful life events
- Increase in substance use

**REMEMBER**
Always ask about alcohol and substance use/abuse.

TWO QUESTION SCREEN

During the past month, have you often been bothered by:

1. Little interest or pleasure in doing things?  □Yes □No
2. Feeling down, depressed or hopeless?    □Yes □No

If one or both responses are “Yes,” proceed to a more detailed assessment tool such as the PHQ-9, available at [www.beaconhealthstrategies.com](http://www.beaconhealthstrategies.com).

If the response is “No” to both questions, the screen is negative.

This guide is adapted from the MacArthur Initiative on Depression in Primary Care Physician Toolkit. Additional information on assessment and treatment guidelines are available on the MacArthur Initiative website: [www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/depression/index.shtml](http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/depression/index.shtml)
**DSM 5 DIAGNOSTIC CRITERIA FOR DEPRESSION**

For major depressive disorders, at least 5 of the following symptoms must be present most of the day, nearly every day, and for at least two weeks.

- Depressed mood
- Markedly diminished interest in usual activities
- Significant increase/loss in appetite/weight
- Insomnia/hypersomnia
- Psychomotor agitation/retardation
- Fatigue or loss of energy
- Feelings of worthlessness or guilt
- Difficulty with thinking, concentrating, or making decisions
- Recurrent thoughts of death or suicide.

**REMEMBER**

At least one of the first two bolded symptoms must be present.

**SUICIDE RISK ASSESSMENT**

If you make a depression diagnosis, you must also assess the patient for suicide risk. Remember: questions about suicidal ideation do not promote suicidal action.

If a patient reports current suicidal thoughts with planning, get emergency behavioral health services immediately or call 911.

Risk factors are not predictors of suicide. The following mnemonic aid SAD PERSONS may be used to assess for risk factors associated with suicide.

- **Sex** (more women attempt suicide, more men succeed)
- **Age** (bimodal age distribution <19 and/or >45)
- **Depression** (especially with anxiety/panic)
- **Previous attempts**
- **ETOH** (alcohol or other substance abuse)
- **Rational thinking loss** (psychosis)
- **Social Supports** (none or limited)
- **Organized plan**
- **No spouse**
- **Sickness** (chronic or debilitating illness)

**TREATMENT OPTIONS**

Consider starting a trial of antidepressant medication and/or a mental health referral for psychotherapy.

Call Beacon Health Strategies at **888.204.5581** for a referral to a behavioral health provider. For additional treatment options, visit [www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/depression/index.shtml](http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/depression/index.shtml).

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