Mood disorders can be referred as a condition where the mind is disturbed to an extent where it becomes difficult to function in relationships or at work. Mood disorder can cause a person to withdraw from social contact or hide their real feelings from their friends or loved ones.

Depression is the commonest disturbance of mood. It is an illness in which the sense of sadness is all pervasive, and there is a constant presence of hopelessness. Feelings of worthlessness, inadequacy and incompetence hound the person who is depressed.

Activities and interests, once pleasurable and stimulating, become stale. Depressed persons isolate themselves by withdrawing from their friends and family members. Work habits may deteriorate and the depressed person is often very easily fatigued and there may be indecisiveness and slowed thinking, difficulty in concentrating and poor memory.

- Loss of interest in activities you once enjoyed
- Eating more or less than usual
- Trouble in sleeping or sleeping more than usual
- Feeling isolated, sad, hopeless, and worthless
- Thoughts of dying and/or suicide
- Irritability

**Types of Mood Disorders**

- Major & persistent depressive disorder
- Bipolar disorder
- Premenstrual dysphoric disorder
- Seasonal affective disorder (SAD)
- Cyclothymic disorders
**MAJOR DEPRESSIVE DISORDER**
prolonged and persistent periods of extreme sadness.

**BIPOLAR DISORDER**
manic depression or bipolar affective disorder, depression that includes alternating times of depression and mania.

**PERSISTENT DEPRESSIVE DISORDER (DYSTHYMIA)**
a long-term (chronic) form of depression.

**SEASONAL AFFECTIVE DISORDER**
This type of depression typically strikes during the short days of the year when the sun isn't out as long.

**CYCLOTHYMIC DISORDER**
Diagnosis requires a two-year history minimum of many episodes of not-quite hypomania and not-quite major depression. It’s a less extreme form of bipolar disorder.

**PREMENSTRUAL DYSPHORIC DISORDER**
This diagnosis is based on the presence of specific symptoms in the week before the onset of menstruation, followed by the resolution of these symptoms after onset.

**CAUSES OF MOOD DISORDERS**
- Stressful life events: death, divorce or trauma
- Chemical imbalances
- Brain structure and function in cases of bipolar disorder
- Previous diagnosis of a mood disorder

Mood disorders should be properly examined by a mental health professional.

**GETTING HELP**

Seek help from a doctor if:
- You are having suicidal thoughts.
- You have experienced any of the symptoms for more than two weeks.

**Psychotherapy**
- Treatments for mood disorders includes psychotherapy, also known as talk therapy as well as medications to help regulate the chemical imbalances in your brain.
- A combination of psychotherapy and medication is often the best course of action to make you feel better.

For more information on mood disorders, contact:
Mental Health Foundation Australia
www.mhfa.org.au

1300 643 287

supportgroup@mhfa.org.au