

Assess, Educate and Treat Patients with Depression



Manage depression in your patients with a systematic approach for accurate assessment and diagnosis. Begin with a nationally recognized tool such as the Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9).

PHQ-9 Score and Interpretation (Billing Code-CPT 96127)

| PHQ-9 Score | Provisional Diagnosis – Depression Severity | Treatment Recommendations |
|-------------|--|--|
| 5-9 | Mild Symptoms Few, if any, symptoms (minimal) in excess of those required for the diagnosis with only minor impairment in occupational functioning or social/relationship functioning. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support and educate your patient, and watch for change in symptoms. |
| 10-14 | Moderate Symptoms Symptoms in excess of the minimal number required for the diagnosis that often keep the person from doing things they need to do. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support and educate your patient.• Consider antidepressant and/or cognitive behavioral therapy.• Watch for changes in symptoms.• Follow-up visit within 4 weeks.• Keep the patient on medication for 6 months to a year. |

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| PHQ-9 Score | Provisional Diagnosis – Depression Severity | Treatment Recommendations |
|-------------|---|--|
| 15-19 | <p>Moderately Severe Depression</p> <p>Displays most symptoms for Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) impacting several areas of functioning. Further clinical assessment needed for bipolar disorder and to rule out other causes/conditions.</p> <p>ICD-10 Dx Codes: F32.0-F32.4; F32.9; F33.0-F33.3; F33.41; F33.9</p> <p>CPT Codes: 90791, 90792, 90832-90834, 90836-90840, 90845, 90847, 90849, 90853, 90867-90870, 90875, 90876, 99221-99223, 99231-99233, 99238, 99239, 99251-99255</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform a safety risk assessment and triage appropriately. • Support and educate patient. • Prescribe antidepressant and refer to psychotherapy. • Requires care coordination and monitoring for medication adherence. • Follow-up visit within 4 weeks of initial prescription with continued follow-up thereafter. • Keep the patient on medication for at least one year. |
| >20 | <p>Severe Depression</p> <p>Nearly all symptoms present for Major Depressive Disorder (MDD), which markedly interfere with daily functioning. Further clinical assessment needed for bipolar disorder and to rule out other causes/conditions.</p> <p>ICD-10 Dx Codes: F32.0-F32.4; F32.9; F33.0-F33.3; F33.41; F33.9</p> <p>CPT Codes: 90791, 90792, 90832-90834, 90836-90840, 90845, 90847, 90849, 90853, 90867-90870, 90875, 90876, 99221-99223, 99231-99233, 99238, 99239, 99251-99255</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform safety risk assessment and triage appropriately. • Support and educate patient. • Prescribe antidepressant and refer to psychotherapy. • Consider potential need for psychiatric referral. • Requires care coordination and close monitoring for medication adherence. • Follow-up visit within 4 weeks of initial prescription with continued follow-up thereafter. • Keep the patient on medication for at least one year. |



Remember BEFORE Diagnosing

- ✓ Rule out medical or mental disorders that can produce symptoms similar to depression:
 - Substance abuse or dependency
 - Mood disorders due to medical conditions
 - Anxiety disorders
 - Adjustment disorders
 - PTSD
 - Eating disorders
 - Hypothyroidism
 - Diabetes
 - Chronic fatigue syndrome
- ✓ Complete a comprehensive medical exam, when clinically appropriate, which may identify metabolic causes of depression.
- ✓ Accurate diagnosis drives appropriate treatment and interventions.

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Promote Antidepressant Medication Adherence

Educating your patients is the key to medication adherence.

- Discuss how to take antidepressants, how they work, the benefits and how long to take them.
- Tell your patients how long they can expect to be on the antidepressant before they start to feel better.
- Stress the importance of taking the medication even if they begin feeling better.
- Talk about common side effects, how long they may last and how to manage them.
- Let your patient know what to do if they have questions or concerns.
- Monitor with scheduled follow-up appointments.

We're here to help, and we continue to support our provider partners with quality incentive programs, quicker claims payments and dedicated local market support. Please contact your Provider Relations Representative if you have questions or need assistance.