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## Clinical Practice Guideline

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# *Treatment of Depression in Adults*

**Revised / Effective:** February 2025

**Next Review:** January 2027

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## RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY

The health plan supports the recommendations from the American Psychiatric Association for the treatment of adults (age 18 and older) with major depressive disorder.

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## REFERENCE

The American College of Physicians (ACP). Nonpharmacologic and Pharmacologic Treatments of Adults in the Acute Phase of Major Depressive Disorder: A Living Clinical Guideline From the American College of Physicians. (2023) Available online at: <https://www.acpjournals.org/doi/10.7326/M22-2056#sec-2>

Note: this is a living clinical guideline. The guideline document linked above will include links to any updates. Downloading a .pdf copy of the guideline is only available for subscribers.

## OTHER RESOURCES

- Trangle M, Gursky J, Haight R, Hardwig J, Hinnenkamp T, Kessler D, Mack N, Myszkowski M. Institute for Clinical Systems Improvement. Adult Depression in Primary Care. Updated March 2016. Available at: <https://www.icsi.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Depr.pdf>
- U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, Veterans Health Administration. VA/DoD Clinical Practice Guideline. Management of Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) (2022). Washington (DC): Department of Veteran Affairs: Available at: <https://www.healthquality.va.gov/guidelines/MH/mdd/>
- American Psychiatric Association (APA). Practice guideline for the treatment of patients with major depressive disorder. 3rd ed. Arlington (VA): American Psychiatric Association (APA), 2010 and reaffirmed October 2015. Available at: [https://psychiatryonline.org/pb/assets/raw/sitewide/practice\\_guidelines/guidelines/mdd.pdf](https://psychiatryonline.org/pb/assets/raw/sitewide/practice_guidelines/guidelines/mdd.pdf)

- American Psychological Association. Clinical Practice Guideline for the Treatment of Depression Across Three Age Cohorts. (2019). Available at: <https://www.apa.org/depression-guidelines/guideline.pdf><https://www.icsi.org/asset/fnhdm3/Depr.pdf>
- Some health plan members may be eligible for participation in a depression management program. Please check benefits for eligibility. Additional educational materials may be included on the health plan's website. Differences between these sources should be discussed with your physician/provider of care.

## POSITION STATEMENT

The American Psychiatric Association guidelines are supported by the health plan because they are based on scientific evidence, and where evidence is lacking, on expert panel consensus. The guidelines reflect the current standard of care.

- The panel members are recognized experts in the treatment of depression and practicing in a variety of professional settings.
- The recommendations are based on a well-defined, comprehensive scientific literature search.
- The methods used to critically appraise the evidence supporting the guideline recommendations are transparent.
- The guidelines clearly state the strength of the evidence associated with guideline recommendations.
- Sources of funding for guideline development are reported; and
- Financial disclosures/potential conflicts of interest for individual panel members are reported.

## GUIDELINE ADOPTION AND RECOMMENDED USE

This guideline has been adopted based on nationally and locally recognized sources. This guideline is based on the most recent medical evidence at the time of the report or on a consensus of panel experts. The health plan adopts guidelines to help practitioners and members make decisions about appropriate health care for specific medical conditions. Guidelines are not a substitute for professional medical advice.

## BENEFIT DETERMINATION

Benefit determinations should be based in all cases on the applicable contract coverage. To the extent that there are any conflicts between these guidelines and the contract language, the contract language takes precedence.

*Date of Origin: January 2014*