

## Common Mental Health Conditions

### 1. Depression

- **Symptoms:** Persistent sadness, loss of interest in activities, fatigue, changes in sleep/appetite, feelings of worthlessness.
- **Causes:** Genetic, biochemical (e.g., serotonin imbalance), trauma, chronic illness.
- **Treatments:**
  - **Therapy:** CBT (Cognitive Behavioral Therapy), interpersonal therapy.
  - **Medication:** SSRIs (e.g., Prozac), SNRIs (e.g., Effexor).
  - **Lifestyle:** Exercise, sunlight exposure, social connection.

### 2. Anxiety Disorders

- **Types:** Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD), Panic Disorder, Social Anxiety.
- **Symptoms:** Excessive worry, panic attacks, avoidance behaviors, physical symptoms (e.g., rapid heartbeat).
- **Treatments:**
  - **Therapy:** Exposure therapy, mindfulness-based CBT.
  - **Medication:** Benzodiazepines (short-term), SSRIs.
  - **Techniques:** Deep breathing, grounding exercises (5-4-3-2-1 method).

### 3. Bipolar Disorder

- **Symptoms:** Alternating episodes of depression and mania (elevated mood, impulsivity).
- **Treatments:**
  - **Medication:** Mood stabilizers (e.g., Lithium), antipsychotics.
  - **Therapy:** Psychoeducation, family therapy.

### 4. PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder)

- **Symptoms:** Flashbacks, hypervigilance, emotional numbness.
- **Treatments:**
  - **Therapy:** EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing), trauma-focused CBT.
  - **Medication:** SSRIs, prazosin (for nightmares).

### 5. OCD (Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder)

- **Symptoms:** Intrusive thoughts (obsessions) and repetitive behaviors (compulsions).
  - **Treatments:**
    - **Therapy:** Exposure and Response Prevention (ERP).
    - **Medication:** SSRIs (higher doses than for depression).
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## **General Treatment Approaches**

### **1. Psychotherapy (Talk Therapy):**

- **CBT:** Challenges negative thought patterns.
- **DBT:** For emotional regulation (e.g., borderline personality disorder).
- **Group Therapy:** Peer support for conditions like addiction.

### **2. Medication:**

- **Antidepressants:** SSRIs (e.g., Zoloft), SNRIs.
- **Antipsychotics:** For schizophrenia or bipolar disorder (e.g., Abilify).
- **Anxiolytics:** Short-term relief (e.g., Xanax).

### **3. Lifestyle & Alternative Therapies:**

- **Mindfulness/Meditation:** Reduces stress and rumination.
- **Exercise:** Boosts endorphins (30 mins/day recommended).
- **Nutrition:** Omega-3s, vitamin D, and balanced diets support brain health.

### **4. Emergency Resources:**

- **Crisis Hotlines:** National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (988 in the U.S.).
- **Hospitalization:** For severe cases (e.g., suicidal ideation).