



# Assess, Educate, and Treat Patients with Depression

Better 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	<p><b>Mild Symptoms</b> Few, if any, symptoms (minimal) in excess of those required for the diagnosis with only minor impairment in occupational functioning or social/relationship functioning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support and educate your patient.</li> <li>Watch for change in symptoms.</li> </ul>
10-14	<p><b>Moderate Symptoms</b> Symptoms in excess of the minimal number required for the diagnosis that often keep the person from doing things they need to do.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support and educate your patient.</li> <li>Consider antidepressant and/or cognitive behavioral therapy.</li> <li>Watch for change in symptoms.</li> <li>Follow-up visit within four weeks.</li> <li>Keep the patient on medication for six months to a year.</li> </ul>
15-19	<p><b>Moderately Severe Depression</b> Displays most symptoms for major depressive disorder (MDD) impacting several areas of functioning.</p> <p>Further clinical assessment needed for bipolar disorder and to rule out other causes/conditions.</p> <p><b>*ICD-10 Major Depression and Dysthymia Diagnosis Codes:</b> F32.0 - F32.5, F32.9, F33.0 - F33.3, F33.40 - F33.42, F33.9, F34.1</p> <p><b>**BH Outpatient CPT Codes:</b> 99078, 99201-99205, 99211-99215, 99241-99245, 99341-99345, 99347-99350, 99381-99387, 99391-99397, 99401-99404, 99411-99412, 99510</p> <p><b>HCPCS Codes:</b> G0155, G0176-G0177, G0409, G0463, H0002, H0004, H0031, H0034-H0037, H0039-H0040, H2000, H2001, H2010-H2011, M0064, T1015</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Perform a safety risk assessment and triage appropriately.</li> <li>Support and educate your patient.</li> <li>Prescribe antidepressant and refer to psychotherapy.</li> <li>Requires care coordination and monitoring for medication adherence.</li> <li>Follow-up visit within four weeks of initial prescription with continued follow-up thereafter.</li> <li>Keep the patient on medication for at least one year.</li> </ul>

PHQ-9 Score	Provisional Diagnosis- Depression Severity	Treatment Recommendations
<b>&gt;20</b>	<p><b>Severe Depression</b>            Nearly all symptoms present for major depressive disorder (MDD), which markedly interfere with daily functioning.</p> <p>Further clinical assessment needed for bipolar disorder and to rule out other causes/conditions.</p> <p><b>*ICD-10 Major Depression and Dysthymia Diagnosis Codes:</b>            F32.0 - F32.5, F32.9, F33.0 - F33.3, F33.40 - F33.42, F33.9, F34.1</p> <p><b>**BH Outpatient CPT® Codes:</b>            99078, 99201-99205, 99211-99215, 99241-99245, 99341-99345, 99347-99350, 99381-99387, 99391-99397, 99401-99404, 99411-99412, 99510</p> <p><b>HCPCS Codes:</b>            G0155, G0176-G0177, G0409, G0463, H0002, H0004, H0031, H0034-H0037, H0039-H0040, H2000, H2001, H2010-H2011, M0064, T1015</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Perform safety risk assessment and triage appropriately.</li> <li>● Support and educate patient.</li> <li>● Prescribe antidepressant and refer to psychotherapy.</li> <li>● Consider potential need for psychiatric referral.</li> <li>● Requires care coordination and close monitoring for medication adherence.</li> <li>● Follow-up visit within four weeks of initial prescription with continued follow-up thereafter.</li> <li>● Keep the patient on medication indefinitely.</li> </ul>

\*2021 ICD-10 Diagnosis Codes

## Things to Remember Before Diagnosing

- Rule out medical or mental disorders that can produce symptoms similar to depression:
  - Substance abuse or dependency
  - Anxiety disorders
  - Eating disorders
  - Diabetes
  - Mood disorders due to medical conditions
  - Hypothyroidism
  - Chronic fatigue syndrome
  - Seasonal affective disorder (SAD)
  - Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Complete a comprehensive medical exam, including lab testing, which may identify metabolic causes of depression.
- Accurate diagnosis drives appropriate treatment and interventions.

## Promote Antidepressant Adherence

Educating your patients is key to maintaining medication compliance.

- Discuss how to take antidepressants, how they work, the benefits of taking them, and how long to continue taking them.
- Tell your patients how long they can expect to be on the antidepressant before they start to feel better.
- Let your patients know that it may take time to find the right dosage or medication to meet their needs.
- Stress the importance of taking the medication as prescribed, even if they start feeling better.
- Let your patients know what to do if they have questions or concerns.
- Talk about common side effects, how long they may last, and how best to manage them.
- Continue to monitor your patients with follow-up appointments.

**Thank you for your continued partnership in helping Arkansas live better. If you have questions or concerns, please reach out to us at 1-866-282-6280 (TTY: 711) or [Providers@ArkansasTotalCare.com](mailto:Providers@ArkansasTotalCare.com).**