



What every parent needs to know about **Mood Disorders**

WHAT IS IT?

Mood Disorders are mental health conditions in which a person's mood is disturbed, such as Depression and Bipolar Disorder.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

- Sad or bored a lot of the time
- Feels hopeless
- Sleeps too much
- Keeps to self a lot
- A major change in sleeping or eating patterns
- Complains a lot about aches and pains when there is no medical problem
- No enthusiasm or interest in normal activities
- Cries a lot for what seems like no reason
- Puts themselves down a lot
- Talks about dying or running away
- Hurts self or others
- Absent from school a lot or has poor performance
- Frequent problems with peers
- Often irritable and aggressive (more so than peers)

HOW IS IT DIAGNOSED?

Early diagnosis and treatment are important. Mood disorders are real illnesses that can be complex and need evaluation by a doctor.

HOW IS IT TREATED?

While medication is sometimes used to lessen the symptoms, family and individual therapy are equally as important in helping children manage their illness.

WHAT CAN I DO?

- Encourage your child to talk
- Listen to your child carefully without lecturing or criticizing him or her
- Be patient and understanding
- Help your child have fun
- Help your child understand that treatment can help him or her get better
- Take any talk of suicide very seriously and get help

WHERE CAN I GET HELP?



See the Mood Disorders Parent Resources Section in the Minds Matter Tool Kit.