

Psychiatrist or Clinical Psychologist Whom Should be Consulted for Depression?

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Introduction

Everyone has sad feelings now and then, but depression is a different animal. It can persist a long period and cause a variety of other symptoms. Clinical depression, often known as major depression, can manifest itself in a variety of ways. While any of these symptoms can emerge at any time, a mental health expert (a psychiatrist or a clinical psychologist) will diagnose depression only if a specific cluster of symptoms appears and lasts for two weeks or more.

Who is a psychiatrist?

Psychiatrists are mental health professionals who have finished their MBBS, a year of medical internship, and three years of residency in the evaluation and treatment of mental illnesses. In private practices, hospitals, university medical centres, prisons, rehabilitation centres, and a variety of other settings, psychiatrists typically treat patients with mental health conditions that require medication, such as moderate to severe levels of mental health issues such as major depression, anxiety disorders, bipolar disorder, PTSD, and schizophrenia.

Who is a clinical psychologist?

Clinical psychologists are unable to administer drugs for mental illnesses. Although clinical psychologists do not specialize in understanding how the body, particularly the brain, influences behaviour, they often receive some training in this area. Clinical psychologists place a strong emphasis on mental processes including cognition (thoughts), mood and emotion, and behaviour, as well as understanding individuals in their environments, particularly in interpersonal connections.

Clinical psychologists work to modify a person's attitude toward their thoughts and, as a result, assist them adjust their behaviour to enhance their functioning, or to bring out and clarify a person's deeper or repressed thoughts and feelings for better understanding and awareness [1]. Clinical psychologists, like psychiatrists, work in many of the same settings as psychiatrists and use talk therapy, cognitive behavioural therapy, and a variety of other therapeutic modules to help patients understand and regulate their symptoms. Understanding biological, psychological, cognitive, and social impacts on behaviour, as well as training in psychological assessment and diagnosis, are all part of their curriculum. Clinical psychologists employ a variety of therapy treatments to assist patients with stress management, trauma recovery, and mental health symptom management. Play therapy is widely used by psychologists while treating children to get insight through observation of behaviours and patterns.

Should you first consult a clinical psychologist or a psychiatrist?

Seeking treatment for those who are suffering from mental illness is

an important step toward living a fulfilling life. However, determining which style of practitioner will provide the most effective treatment is not always simple. The good news is that competent mental health practitioners have the necessary abilities and knowledge to help clients make an informed decision about their therapy's trajectory. Psychiatrists and clinical psychologists commonly recommend patients to one another [2]. However, before determining whether to see a clinical psychologist or a psychiatrist first, consider the following factors.

If you want to talk about and work through an issue in a one-on-one situation, a clinical psychologist can be a good fit.

You should first contact with a psychiatrist before using psychiatric drugs for symptomatic relief from a mental health problem.

A clinical psychologist may be able to assist you if the problem you're trying to solve is one of relationships, such as a problem at work or with a family member.

If you're experiencing debilitating mental health problems that are interfering with your daily life, a psychiatrist can be a good place to start.

As previously stated, both psychiatrists and clinical psychologists are concerned with supporting patients in improving their mental wellbeing, and both are usually trained in a variety of therapeutic modalities [3,4]. You don't have to know everything there is to know about these two professionals before approaching them for help. The best place to start is with a practitioner you feel comfortable with. They'll listen to your reasons for seeking treatment, analyze your symptoms, try to grasp your medical, psychological, and family histories, and help you decide what to do next. Also, keep in mind that many individuals seek treatment from multiple mental health professionals before finding the right match.

Who should you see for treating your depression?

A number of criteria, including the severity of your disease and your depression treatment options, will influence the type of mental health specialist you see. If you experience severe depression, a psychiatrist will be able to rule out any underlying medical issues and prescribe medication that is tailored to your specific needs. A clinical psychologist can assist you if you are going through a difficult time and want to focus on gaining a better understanding of your thoughts and behaviours. Medication may not be necessary. A clinical psychologist can work on the sources of emotional disturbance in your life by analysing major aspects of your life such as childhood experiences, adolescence, relationships with key figures in your life, job and sexual satisfaction, meaning deficits in life, and the impact of personality issues on depression [5]. All of these areas are critical to comprehend in order to develop a successful psychotherapy plan for depression rehabilitation. However, in cases when depression has progressed beyond moderate levels and is seriously affecting a person's daily functioning, a combination of medication and psychotherapy is regarded the best approach for rehabilitation.

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