

# Depression: Psychosocial Interventions

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Psychosocial intervention refers to the treatment of psychiatric and behavioural disorders either through formal psychotherapy based on a psychological model of illness or through broader educational and (or) service coordination interventions. While historically this required the establishment of a professional relationship between a patient and a therapist, newer technologies, such as computer, Internet, self-help, and, to a lesser extent, telephone therapies, provide a method for intervention that can be scientifically designed and tested. While some forms of psychotherapy depend on models not based on science, many interventions for major depression are explicitly designed to alleviate depressive symptoms and prevent relapse. In so doing, psychosocial research is able to invoke a wide range of science—from demonstrating that such interventions intervene at brain-processing levels and cause structural changes within the brain, as demonstrated by neuroimaging, to employing sophisticated clinical and public health research techniques to optimize clinical outcomes.

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