

# DEPRESSION AND MOOD DISORDERS IN SENIORS: IDENTIFYING, SUPPORTING, AND GUIDING

**Training for professionals supporting elderly individuals in all types of establishments and services**

Recognize, support, and prevent depression in the elderly with confidence and professionalism

<b>Duration</b> : 5 hours	<b>Modules</b> : 4 modules
<b>Lessons</b> : 16 lessons	<b>Audience</b> : Caregivers, home helpers, nurses, activity coordinators in elderly care
<b>Format</b> : 100% online, asynchronous	<b>Provider</b> : N° 11757351875
<b>Certification</b> : Qualiopi	<b>Price</b> : On request

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## Course description

This 5-hour training enables professionals to distinguish depression from normal aging-related mood changes, identify risk factors and warning signs, and adopt an appropriate support posture. Participants will learn to use screening tools, prevent suicidal risk, and work effectively within a multidisciplinary team. The training addresses the specifics of depression in the presence of cognitive disorders and provides practical tools for daily support. At the end of the training, each participant will be able to identify a depressive situation, adapt their support approach, and mobilize the right resources to ensure quality care.

## Module summary

<b>MODULE 1</b>	Understanding Depression in the Elderly	4 lessons
<b>MODULE 2</b>	Identifying Depression — Observation and Assessment Tools	4 lessons
<b>MODULE 3</b>	Accompanying the Depressed Person — Posture and Practices	4 lessons
<b>MODULE 4</b>	Prevent, Guide, and Work as a Team	4 lessons

## Learning objectives

### Learning objectives

- Distinguish depression from mood disorders related to aging and identify geriatric specificities
- Recognize risk factors, warning signs, and atypical forms of depression in seniors
- Use screening tools and observe relevant signs in daily life
- Identify and respond to suicidal risk in the elderly
- Adopt a supportive posture adapted to depressed individuals with or without cognitive disorders
- Integrate meaningful activities and DYNSEO tools into individualized care
- Direct to appropriate professionals and work effectively in a multidisciplinary team
- Implement prevention strategies and support caregiving teams

## General information

<b>Duration</b>	5 hours
<b>Target audience</b>	Caregivers, home helpers, nurses, activity coordinators, professionals in medicalized residences, home care services, day care centers
<b>Prerequisites</b>	None, training accessible to all adult audiences
<b>Price</b>	Upon request - VAT not applicable (article 261-4-4° of the French General Tax Code)
<b>Certification</b>	Qualiopi - Certificate of completion



**Lesson 1 - Depression — definition, prevalence, and geriatric specifics**

- Diagnostic criteria (DSM-5) adapted for the elderly
- Prevalence: 15-20% of people over 65, often underdiagnosed
- Somatic masking, absence of expressed sadness, cognitive complaints
- Difference between normal sadness, grief, and major depressive episode

**Lesson 2 - Risk factors in the elderly**

- Accumulated losses: bereavements, autonomy, activities, residence change
- Social isolation and loneliness as primary modifiable risk factor
- Associated conditions: chronic pain, neurodegenerative diseases, thyroid disorders
- Depressive medications: corticosteroids, beta-blockers, antihypertensives

**Lesson 3 - Atypical forms and diagnostic pitfalls**

- Masked depression: complaints without expressed sadness
- Depressive pseudodementia: depression mimicking cognitive disorder
- Differentiating depression and apathy: similar but distinct presentations
- Identifying depression in dementia without verbal questionnaires

**Lesson 4 - Mood disorders that are not depressive — anxiety, pathological grief, dysthymia**

- Generalized anxiety: somatic and behavioral manifestations
- Late bipolar disorder: an unknown reality in those over 65
- Dysthymia: chronic low-intensity depression, often trivialized
- Pathological grief: when mourning does not resolve naturally

**Lesson 1 - Observable signs in daily life**

- Behavioral changes: withdrawal, refusal of activities, isolation
- Changes in appetite and sleep as early warning signs
- Communication changes: mutism, crying, recurring negative statements
- Psychomotor slowing: distinguishing from normal fatigue

**Lesson 2 - Screening tools usable by non-medical professionals**

- Short GDS (Geriatric Depression Scale): administration and limitations
- MINI-GDS with 4 items: quick screening in minutes
- Cornell Scale for Depression in Dementia for cognitive impairment
- Using tools without replacing medical diagnosis

**Lesson 3 - Observe and transmit — the key role of the frontline caregiver**

- Caregiver and home helper as first alert link
- What to document: behaviors, words, changes over time
- Formulating alerts without over-interpretation
- Continuity of observation between day and night teams

**Lesson 4 - Suicidal risk in the elderly**

- Seniors represent 30% of suicide deaths in France
- Specific risk factors: bereavement, chronic pain, dependency announcement
- Warning signs: "I am no longer useful", refusal of care
- Immediate actions in suicidal crisis situations

**Lesson 1 - The supportive posture in the face of depression**

- Avoid counterproductive injunctions: "Smile!", "You should be happy"
- Active listening and emotional validation: naming without minimizing
- Maintain connection without forcing: regular presence, small daily gestures

- Manage your own emotional resonance with depressive suffering

### Lesson 2 - Stimulate without rushing – the role of activities in treatment

- Physical activity's role in reducing depressive symptoms
- Meaningful activities: gardening, cooking, music, intergenerational connections
- Reminiscence as therapeutic tool: revisiting past for positive identity
- Adapting activities to daily state: suggest, don't impose, respect refusals

### Lesson 3 - The medical treatment and its implications for the caregiver

- Antidepressants in elderly: onset time, side effects to monitor
- Psychotherapy for seniors: CBT, interpersonal therapy, psychological support
- Electroconvulsive therapy (ECT): indications and caregiver role
- Medication vigilance: interactions, falls, withdrawal symptoms

### Lesson 4 - Accompanying the depressed person with associated cognitive disorders

- Depression in dementia: apathy, irritability, unexplained crying
- Adapting communication: simple words, physical presence, non-verbal contact
- Risk of undertreatment: depression tolerated as "normal" in dementia
- Working with care team to harmonize behavioral responses

## MODULE 4

## Prevent, Guide, and Work as a Team

4 lessons

### Lesson 1 - The prevention of depression in institutions

- Fight isolation: activities, outings, visits, support groups
- Preserve identity and social roles in establishment life
- Support transitions into institutions: period of major vulnerability
- Detect and manage grief: establishment support policy

### Lesson 2 - Directing to the right professionals

- Primary care physician: first contact, sharing observations
- Liaison psychiatrist and memory consultation: when to seek help
- Psychologist in facility or private practice: role, indications, limitations
- Territorial arrangements: MAIA, specialized Alzheimer teams, geriatric CMP

### Lesson 3 - DYNSEO tools to prevent and support depression

- E-MEMORIES: therapeutic reminiscence for self-esteem and identity
- EDITH: gentle cognitive stimulation to maintain engagement and reduce apathy
- TOP CULTURE and BEBUZZ: collective activities against isolation
- Integrating tools into individualized care project focused on well-being

### Lesson 4 - Taking care of the caregiving team in the face of residents' depression

- Emotional impact of supporting depressed individuals on caregivers
- Recognizing compassion fatigue and vicarious depression risk
- Team regulation spaces: practice analysis, supervision, debriefing
- Building culture that cares for both residents and professionals

## Teaching methods

- Online training accessible 24/7 from any device
- Self-paced learning with structured modules and lessons
- Practical case studies and real-life scenarios
- Downloadable resources and screening tools
- Knowledge assessment quizzes throughout the training
- Certificate of completion upon successful completion