Depression and Anxiety Disorders

What is the issue?

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According to new estimates by the WHO, **depression is the largest disability worldwide**.

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What is a Depressive disorder?

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- Depressive disorders is a mental disorder characterized by **at least two weeks of low mood** that is present across most situations.
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- It is often accompanied by low self-esteem, disturbed sleep, loss of interest, poor concentration, and pain without a clear cause.
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- Such disorders include two main sub-categories: **major depressive disorders,** which involve symptoms such as depressed mood; and
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- **Dysthymia,** a persistent or chronic form of mild depression but it tend to be **less intense and last longer.**
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What is an Anxiety disorder?

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- Anxiety disorders are a group of mental disorders **characterized by feelings of anxiety and fear.**
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- Anxiety is a worry about future events and fear is a reaction to current events.
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- The cause of anxiety disorders is a combination of genetic and

environmental factors.
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- Generalised anxiety disorder, panic disorder, phobias, social anxiety disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder and post-traumatic stress disorder, all comes under Anxiety disorders.
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What are the facts?

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- The number of people living with depression has increased by approximately 18% between 2005 and 2015.
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- Over 80% of the disease burden is in developing countries.
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- 1 in 20 people in the world have depression and it has a high level of impairment or disability associated with it.
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- In India, nearly 5% of population is dealing with depression and a further 3% is dealing with stress related disorders.
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- In terms of lost health, the consequences are colossal.
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- At its most severe state, depression can lead to suicide. **Depression is the major contributor to suicidal deaths.**
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- Suicide accounted for almost 1.5% of all deaths worldwide in 2015.
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What is the major worry?

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- Even though, there are known and effective treatments for depression, **fewer than half of those affected in the world receive such treatments** (in many countries, fewer than 10%).
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- Barriers to effective care include lack of resources, dearth of trained health-care providers, and social stigma associated with mental disorders.
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- Ex: India has less than 4,000 psychiatrists to treat its mentally ill people.
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- The WHO report also said that **inaccurate assessment** was another barrier to effective mental health care.
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- People who are depressed are often not correctly diagnosed, and others who do not have the disorder are too often misdiagnosed and prescribed anti-depressants.
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Source: The Hindu, TOI

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