

One in three hospitalized patients experience symptoms of depression, study shows

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About one in three hospitalized patients shows symptoms of depression, potentially affecting their clinical outcomes, a new Cedars-Sinai study has found.

Research from the Department of Psychiatry and the Department of Medicine at Cedars-Sinai analyzed data from 20 studies on depression screenings in hospitals and found that 33 percent of hospitalized [patients](#) had symptoms of depression such as feeling down or hopeless, having little interest or pleasure in doing things, and experiencing significant sleep and appetite changes.

The study is published in the *Journal of Hospital Medicine* and shows that [screening](#) hospitalized patients for depression is both feasible and important, says Waguih William IsHak, MD, lead author of the study.

IsHak said that patients who have symptoms of depression are less likely to take their medications and keep up with their outpatient appointments. These behaviors could lead to delayed recoveries, longer [hospital](#) stays and a greater chance of hospital readmissions.

"Upon admission to the hospital, patients are screened for all kinds of medical issues such as abnormalities in blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar," IsHak said. "Adding a screening for depression seizes a golden opportunity to initiate and maintain treatment."

Cedars-Sinai routinely screens all hospitalized adult patients for depression. The screenings are performed by nurses who interview each patient within 24 hours of admission. The initial screenings comprise two questions on mood and interest in pleasurable activities. If indications of [depressive](#)

[symptoms](#) arise, nurses administer a more detailed questionnaire about energy, concentration, appetite, sleep patterns and other indications of depression.

Patients who screen positive for depressive symptoms receive interventions from their Cedars-Sinai admitting physicians, social workers and the psychiatry team, which includes psychiatrists, psychologists, psychiatric social workers and a psychiatric nurse.

"We know that depression is a serious factor in any patient's recovery," IsHak said. "These findings show that hospitals might experience improved outcomes by initiating a [depression](#) screening program."

Provided by Cedars-Sinai Medical Center

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