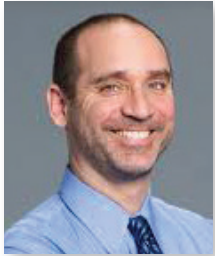


# Role of Mental Health Professionals in Comprehensive MS Management



**Jonathan E. Howard, MD**  
Assistant Professor  
Departments of Psychiatry and  
Neurology  
NYU Langone School of  
Medicine  
New York, NY

The treatment of psychiatric disorders is challenging, especially for persons with MS. This presentation will provide an overview of psychiatric problems in MS, the diagnosis, etiology, treatment, as well as areas of future research. Depression is the major psychiatric disorder encountered in MS, along with fatigue and anxiety. It is estimated that nearly half of people with MS will experience depression in their lifetime, and at any given moment, one-third of them meet the criteria

for a mood disorder. In surveys, patients rate the “invisible symptoms” of MS as being more disabling than the visible ones. Suicide rates are also higher in the MS population. Thus, this presentation will highlight the importance of screening for depression and other mood disorders in persons with MS, and offer possible etiological reasons, both biological and psychosocial.

This presentation will use illustrative clinical cases, as well as literature review, to evaluate the role of medications, therapy, social work, as well as other treatment modalities. Finally, the lecture will identify gaps in current knowledge, as well as unanswered questions, and areas for future research.