

# Disruptive Mood Dysregulation Disorder, Pediatric



## Behavioral Health Program

### Contact a Health Care Provider If:

- If your child's behavior becomes violent (punching, kicking, throwing objects)
- If your child becomes aggressive toward anyone/property
- If your child's behavior is affecting daily life at home or school
- If your child is thinking about hurting others and is making a plan to do so

### Crisis Resources:

You can go to your nearest emergency department or call

- Delaware Child/Adolescent Crisis Line 1-800-969-4357
- Delaware statewide crisis line 1-800-577-2484
- National suicide crisis helpline 1-800-273-8255
- Your local emergency services 911

### Crisis Centers:

You can go to any of these crisis centers open 24 hours, 7 days a week

#### New Castle County

Rockford Center (All ages)	Meadowood Behavioral Health (Only 12-17)
100 Rockford Drive	575 South Dupont HWY
Newark, DE 19713	New Castle, DE 19702
302-996-5480	302-213-3568

#### Kent and Sussex County

Dover Behavioral Health (Only 12-17)	Sun Behavioral Health (Only 13-17)
725 Horsepond Road	21655 Biden Ave
Dover, DE 19901	Georgetown, DE 19947
302-741-0140	302-604-5600

**\*\*Any children in crisis need to call 911, or report to nearest emergency room**

## **What Is Disruptive Mood Dysregulation Disorder?**

Disruptive mood dysregulation disorder (DMDD) is a mental health disorder that affects children and adolescents who are 6–18 years of age. A child with this disorder regularly has severe temper outbursts that affect daily life. These outbursts are much more severe than what might be expected for the situation and the child's age.

## **What are the causes?**

The cause of this condition is not known.

## **What increases the risk?**

Your child may be more likely to develop this condition if he or she:

- Has a long-standing history of irritability or anger.
- Was diagnosed with bipolar disorder in the past but did not show all the signs of bipolar disorder.
- Started having symptoms of irritability and temper outbursts before the age of 10.
- Traumatic Events (Abuse, Neglect, Witnessing abuse)
- Absent parental figures

## **What are the signs or symptoms?**

Symptoms of this condition include:

- Severe temper outbursts that are extreme for the situation.
- Severe temper outbursts that happen three or more times a week for one year or longer.
- Angry or irritable mood between temper outbursts.
- Angry, sad, or irritable mood nearly every day.
- Trouble with daily living because of anger or irritability.

## **How is this diagnosed?**

This condition may be diagnosed based on your child's symptoms. The health care provider will assess how severe the symptoms are and how long they have lasted. To be diagnosed with this condition, your child must have shown the symptoms for one year or longer. Your child may be referred to a child therapist to confirm the diagnosis and begin treatment.

## **How is this treated?**

Your child's health care provider will create a treatment plan just for your child. Treatment options for this condition may include:

- Cognitive behavioral therapy. This is a form of talk therapy that can help your child learn coping skills to identify and regulate his or her moods and feelings.
- Medicines such as antidepressants, stimulants, or antipsychotics.
- Parent training to help you learn to manage your child's behavior at home and decrease outbursts.
- Working with your child's teacher or school. This may involve developing an educational plan to address behavioral and emotional challenges.

- Computer-based programs that help your child learn how to accurately read facial expressions. This skill can help prevent your child from misreading other people's faces in ways that can affect his or her mood.

### **Follow these instructions at home:**

- Keep track of your child's moods and outbursts and provide these records to your child's health care provider. Try to document what happens before, during, and after an outburst.
- Learn as much as you can about the disorder. Ask questions when you visit your child's health care provider.
- Learn about the risks and benefits of different treatments.
- Follow any parent training you receive. This may include ways to respond to irritable behavior and how to avoid or predict angry outbursts from your child.



### **Summary**

- A child with disruptive mood dysregulation disorder (DMDD) regularly has severe temper outbursts that affect daily life.
- This condition affects children and adolescents who are 6–18 years of age.
- Symptoms of this disorder include temper outbursts on a regular basis and an angry or irritable mood between temper outbursts.
- Your child will only be diagnosed with this disorder if he or she has shown the symptoms for one year or longer.
- Treatment may include talk therapy (*cognitive behavioral therapy*), parent training, and antidepressant, stimulant, or antipsychotic medicines.

This information is not intended to replace advice given to you by your health care provider. Make sure you discuss any questions you have with your health care provider.