Real-World Treatment **Experiences and Expectations** by Symptom Severity in Patients With Major Depressive Disorder

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Objective

To examine real-world treatment experiences and expectations by symptom severity among patients with MDD

Conclusions

- Using a large recent survey with 385 participants with MDD, 49% and 36% of the participants were found to exhibit severe/very severe and moderate symptom severity, respectively
- Participants with severe/very severe or moderate symptom severity were less likely to report satisfaction with symptom relief, confidence in their treatment, belief in receiving optimal care, and ability to work or complete daily activities, and were more likely to experience side effects and report a moderate to high burden of these effects vs participants in the none/mild group
- All participants identified weight gain, cognitive impairment, and sexual dysfunction as the most impactful side effects, and improved functionality, increased interest/pleasure, and reduced feelings of hopelessness/anxiety/agitation as the treatment goals
- More than 80% of all participants desired treatment responses that were either immediate or within one week

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INTRODUCTION

- Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) is a prevalent and debilitating psychiatric disorder characterized by persistent sadness or loss of interest, often accompanied by changes in weight, sleep patterns, energy levels, and diminished quality of life; it's also associated with an increased risk of suicidal thoughts^{1,2}
- MDD symptoms vary in intensity, affecting treatment outcomes and individual experiences²
- Despite numerous approved treatment options, many patients with MDD struggle to achieve desired improvement due to delayed therapeutic effects and side effects³
- Symptom severity ranges from mild to very severe, correlating with functional impairment and reduced quality of life⁴

METHODS

Study design

- A survey was developed with input from two clinical experts in MDD and patients through the Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA)
- Adults with a self-reported diagnosis of MDD, and current or past use of MDD medications completed the survey from December 2021 to January 2022
- MDD symptom severity was measured by the 16-item Quick Inventory of Depression Symptomology (QIDS-SR-16)

Outcomes

- Patient demographics and comorbid medical conditions associated with MDD
- Current and past MDD-related treatments
- Line of therapy and time on treatment for current MDD-related treatment Current treatment experience
- Satisfied with symptom relief: somewhat/very/extremely satisfied Confident in their current treatment: somewhat/very/extremely confident
- Believe receiving the best available treatment: completely/somewhat agree
- Ability to function (work or daily activities): no issue (agree/strongly agree)
- Any side effect
- Reporting moderate or high side effect burden: moderately/very/extremely bothersome
- Treatment response expectations and treatment goals

Analyses

- Three symptom severity groups were constructed based on QIDS-SR-16 total score: none/mild (≤10), moderate (11-15), and severe/very severe (≥16)
- Descriptive analyses were conducted with means and standard deviations (SD) for continuous variables, and counts and percentages for categorical variables
- Treatment experience outcomes were analyzed using logistic regression adjusting for age, gender, autoimmune disorders, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, chronic pain, chronic fatigue, migraine, attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), anxiety, obsessivecompulsive disorder (OCD), and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD); predicted values between symptom severity groups were tested with a significance level set at 0.05, using a two-tailed approach and adjusting for multiple comparisons

RESULTS

Participant Characteristics

- Overall, 385 participants completed the survey; nearly half reported having severe/very severe depression symptoms (n=190 [49.4%]) (**Table 1**)
- Participants in the none/mild group were significantly older than those with severe/very severe and moderate symptom severity (p<0.05)
- Participants in the severe/very severe group were significantly more likely to be on medical leave or unemployed, on a later line of therapy, and to be on their current treatment for a briefer period than those in the none/mild group (all p<0.05)

Table 1. Participant Demographics and Characteristics

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	None/mild (n=56)	Moderate (n=139)	Severe/very severe (n=190)
Age, years, mean (SD) ^a	54.8 (12.2)	45.6 (12.3)	44.6 (12.2)
Women, n (%)	41 (73)	111 (80)	155 (82)
Time since diagnosis, n (%) ^a			
<5 years	11 (20)	28 (20)	43 (23)
5-10 years	4 (7)	33 (24)	46 (24)
>10 years	41 (73)	78 (56)	101 (53)
White	46 (82)	117 (84)	148 (78)
On medical leave/unemployed ^a	9 (16)	38 (27)	80 (42)
Public insurance	22 (39)	50 (36)	83 (44)
Private insurance	25 (47)	75 (57)	84 (47)
Monotherapy	40 (80)	64 (56)	89 (53)
Line of therapy, n (%) ^{a,b}			
First	10 (20)	27 (23)	32 (19)
Second	19 (38)	25 (22)	37 (22)
Third	7 (14)	24 (21)	20 (12)
Fourth or more	8 (16)	33 (29)	69 (41)
Time on current treatment, n (%) ^{a, b, c}			
<5 years	20 (40)	49 (43)	90 (54)
5-10 years	12 (24)	40 (35)	57 (34)
>10 years	18 (36)	26 (23)	20 (12)

^a p<0.05 ^b Denominator of percentage restricted to participants on current MDD-related treatment; none/mild, n=50; moderate, n=115; severe/very severe, n=167. ^c Reflects medication

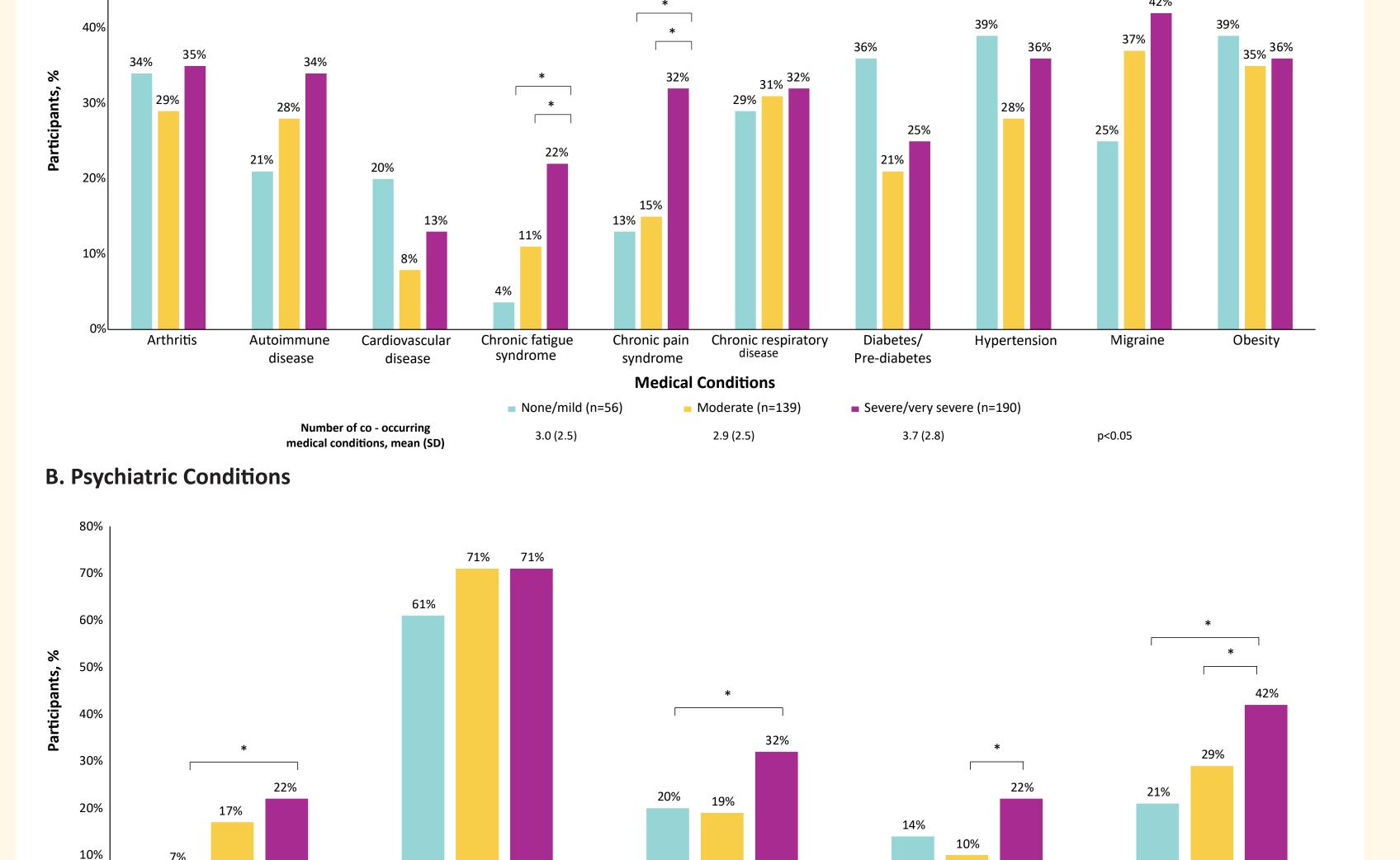
with longest duration of treatment for respondents on adjunctive therapy.

SD, standard deviation

Co-occurring Conditions

- Participants in the severe/very severe group had significantly more co-occurring conditions than those in the none/mild or moderate group (p<0.05) (Figure 1)
- There were significant differences in chronic pain syndrome, chronic fatigue syndrome, ADHD, bipolar disorder, OCD, and PTSD across severity groups (all p<0.05)

Figure 1. Participants With Co-Occurring Conditions by Symptom Severity

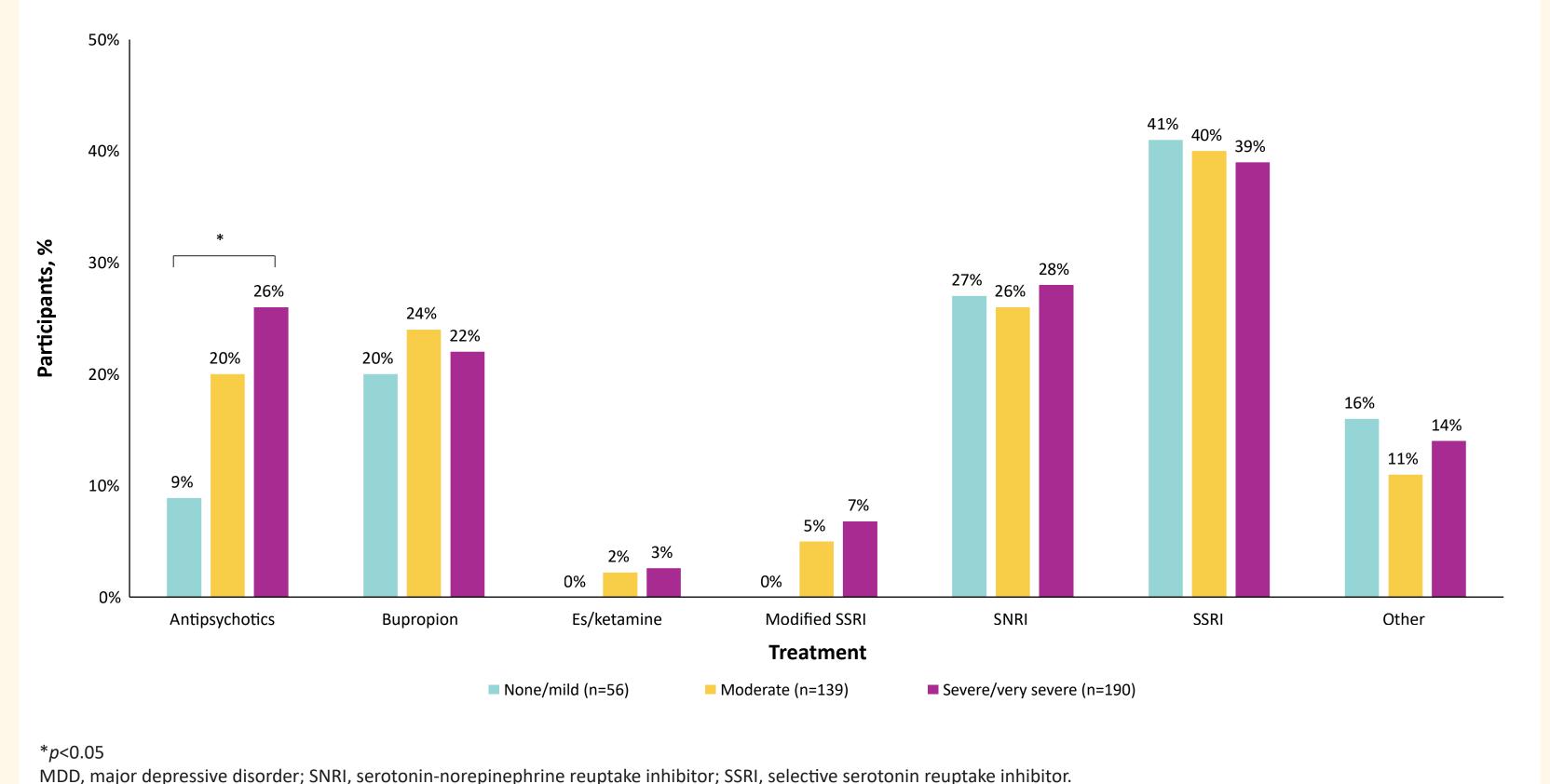


ADHD, attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder; OCD, obsessive-compulsive disorder; PTSD, post-traumatic stress disorder.

MDD-Related Treatments

- Of 332 (86%) participants currently receiving MDD-related treatment, 193 (58%) were receiving monotherapy treatment
- The most common current treatments were SSRIs (39%), SNRIs (27%), bupropion (22%), and antipsychotics (22%) (Figure 2)

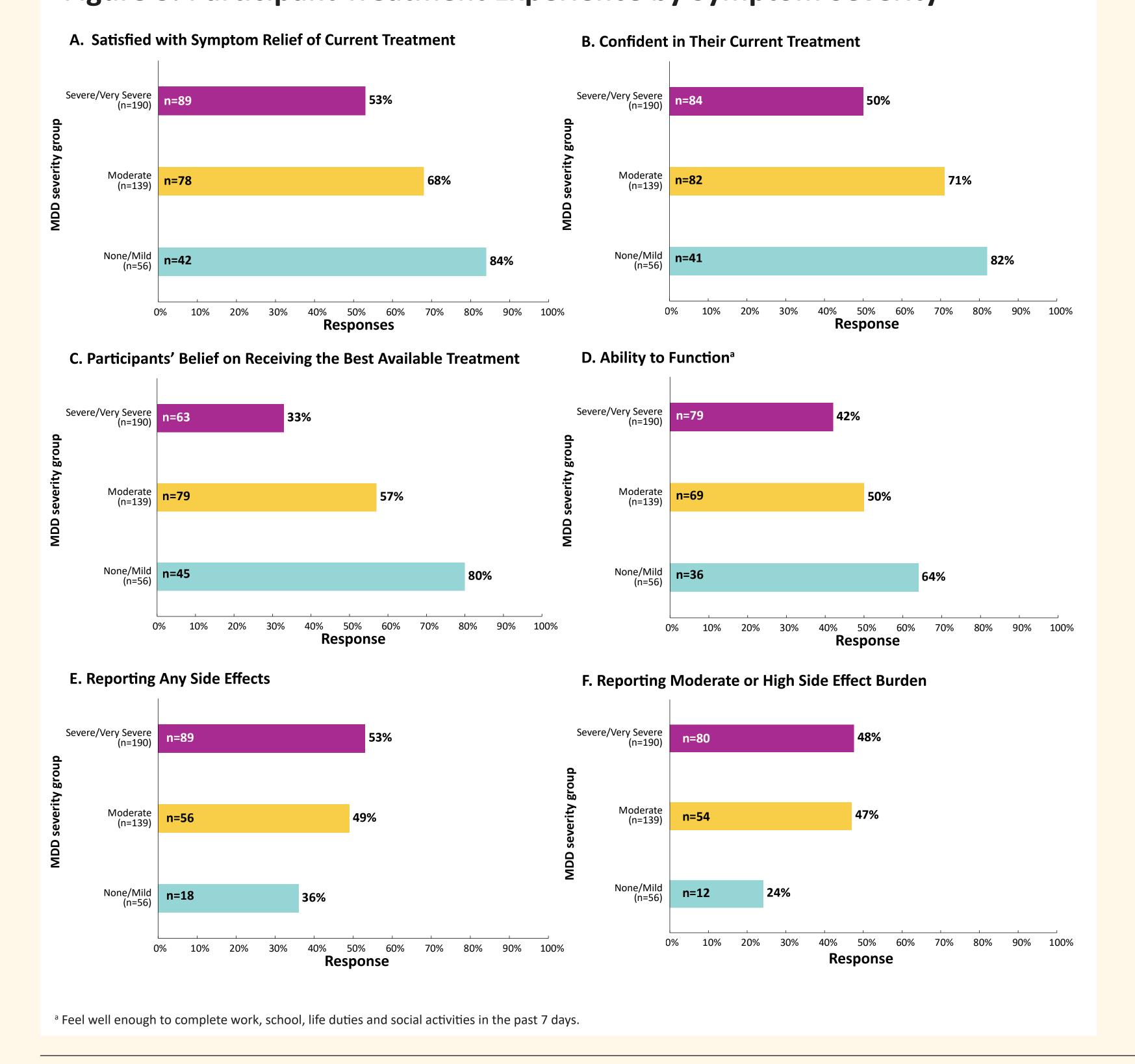
Figure 2. Current MDD-Related Treatments by Symptom Severity



Treatment Experience, Expectations, and Goals

- Participants in the severe/very severe group reported worse treatment experience vs those in the none/ mild or moderate groups (Figure 3)
- Side effects were reported in 53%, 49%, and 36% of participants in the severe/very severe, moderate, none/mild groups, respectively, with 48%, 47%, and 24% reporting moderate/high burden of side effect
- The most impactful side effects across all groups were weight gain, cognitive impairment, sexual dysfunction, and breakthrough symptoms

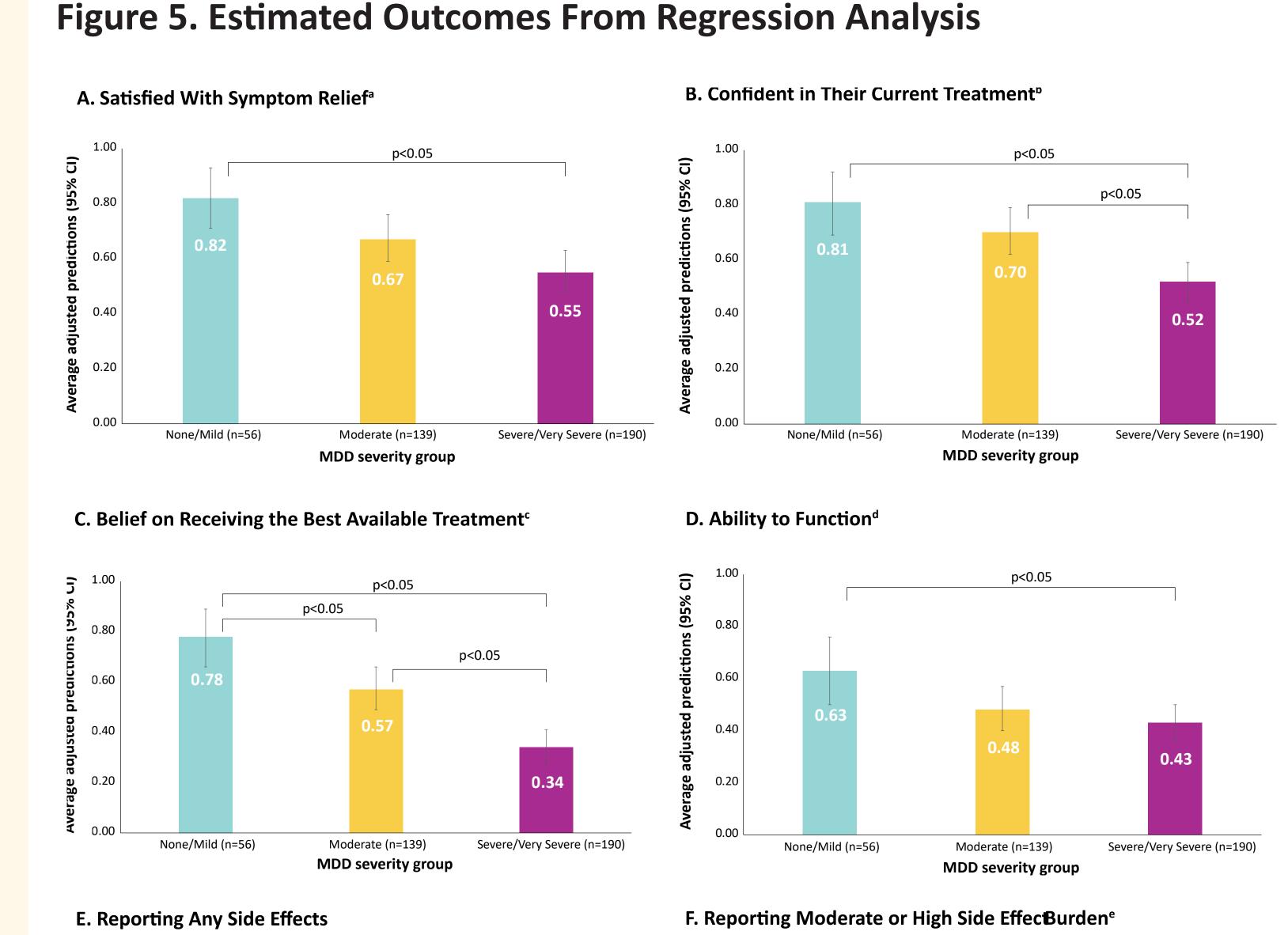
Figure 3. Participant Treatment Experience by Symptom Severity

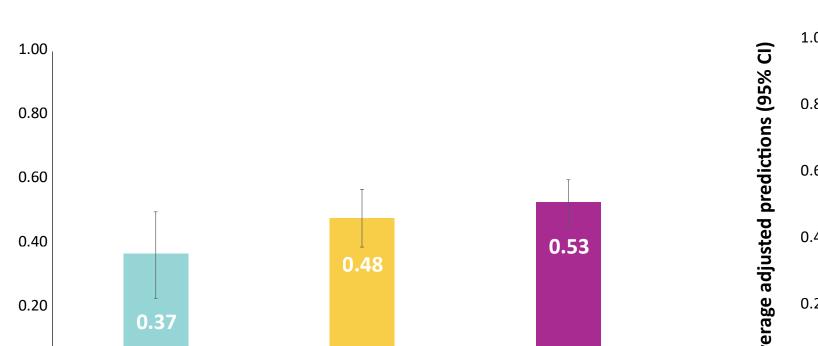


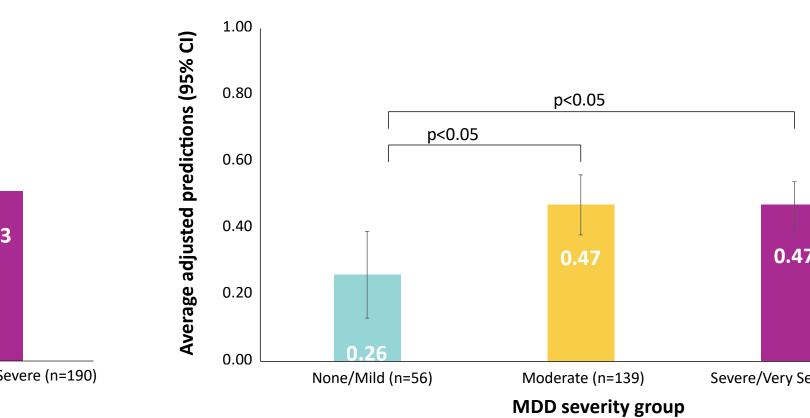
Overall, 84% of all respondents wished for immediate or within-one-week treatment responses (Figure 4)

Regression analysis

 Participants in the none/mild group vs those in the severe/very severe group were significantly more inclined to believe they were receiving the best treatment available, to be satisfied with their symptom relief, more confident in their current treatment, and were more likely to complete their work or other normal daily activity, and significantly less likely to report moderate or high side effect burden (p<0.05) (Figure 5)







^a Somewhat/very/extremely satisfied. ^b Somewhat/very/extremely confident. ^c Completely/somewhat agree. ^d No issue (agree/strongly agree). ^e Moderately/very/extremely bothersom

 Improved functionality, increased interest/pleasure, and reduced feelings of hopelessness/anxiety/ agitation were reported as respondents' main treatment goals



