



Understanding Depression

Webcast presented by the National Council for
Community Behavioral Healthcare in observance of
May is Mental Health Month

Program content based upon Mental Health First Aid USA



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Overview

- + Understanding Depression & Mood Disorders
 - Signs & Symptoms
 - Risk factors

- + How to Help
 - *Suicidal Behavior*
 - *Depressive Symptoms*
 - *Non-Suicidal Self-Injury*

The logo for the National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare, consisting of a blue square with white horizontal lines of varying lengths, creating a stylized 'N' shape.

NATIONAL COUNCIL
FOR COMMUNITY BEHAVIORAL HEALTHCARE

www.TheNationalCouncil.org

- + Not-for-profit association
- + Represent 1,700 behavioral healthcare organizations
- + Member organizations treat and care for six million adults and children with mental and addiction disorders



What Is a Mental Disorder?

A **mental disorder** or **mental illness** is a diagnosable illness that:

- + Affects a person's thinking, emotional state, and behavior
- + Disrupts the person's ability to
 - Work
 - Carry out daily activities
 - Engage in satisfying relationships



U.S. Adults with a Mental Disorder in Any One Year

Type of Mental Disorder	% Adults
Anxiety disorder	18.1
Major depressive disorder	6.7
Substance use disorder	3.8
Bipolar disorder	2.6
Eating disorders	2.1
Schizophrenia	1.1
Any mental disorder	26.2



The Facts

- + Mental health problems are common.
- + Stigma is associated with mental health problems.
- + Many people are not well informed about mental health problems.
- + Professional help is not always on hand.
- + People often do not know how to respond.
- + People with mental health problems often do not seek help.



Recovery from Mental Illness

“Recovery is the process in which people are able to live, work, learn, and participate fully in their communities.”

“For some, this is the ability to live a fulfilling and productive life despite a disability.”

“For others, recovery implies the reduction or complete remission of symptoms.”

— *President’s New Freedom Commission on Mental Health, 2003*



What Is Mental Health First Aid?

Mental Health First Aid is the help offered to a person developing a mental health problem or experiencing a mental health crisis. The first aid is given until appropriate treatment and support are received or until the crisis resolves.



The Mental Health First Aid Action Plan

- + **A**ssess for risk of suicide or harm
- + **L**isten nonjudgmentally
- + **G**ive reassurance and information
- + **E**ncourage appropriate professional help
- + **E**ncourage self-help and other support strategies



Marie Dudek

American Foundation for Suicide
Prevention, Central Florida Chapter
& Creating Today, Inc.



What Is Depression?

- + Everyday blues, sadness or a short-term depressed mood is common
- + Many individuals may cope with these feelings without significant impact on their everyday life.
- + Episodes of *major depressive disorder* last for at least 2 weeks and affect a person's
 - Emotions, thinking, behavior, and physical well-being
 - Ability to work and have satisfying relationships

Signs and Symptoms of Depression

Emotions

- + Sadness
- + Anxiety
- + Guilt
- + Anger
- + Mood swings
- + Lack of emotional responsiveness
- + Feelings of helplessness/hopelessness
- + Irritability

Signs and Symptoms of Depression

Thoughts

- + Frequent self-criticism
- + Self-blame
- + Pessimism
- + Impaired memory and concentration
- + Indecisiveness and confusion
- + Tendency to believe others see one in a negative light
- + Thoughts of death and suicide





Signs and Symptoms of Depression

Behaviors

- + Crying spells
- + Withdrawal from others
- + Neglect of responsibilities
- + Loss of interest in personal appearance
- + Loss of motivation
- + Slow movement
- + Use of drugs and alcohol



Signs and Symptoms of Depression

Physical

- + Fatigue/lack of energy
- + Sleeping too much or too little
- + Overeating or loss of appetite
- + Weight loss or gain
- + Constipation
- + Headaches
- + Irregular menstrual cycle
- + Loss of sexual desire
- + Unexplained aches and pains



Depression in the Workplace

- + Decreased productivity
- + Morale problems
- + Lack of cooperation
- + Safety problems, accidents
- + Absenteeism or presenteeism
- + Being tired all the time
- + Complaints of unexplained aches and pains
- + Alcohol or other drug misuse

Types of Mood Disorders

- + Major depressive disorder
- + Bipolar disorder
- + Postpartum depression
- + Seasonal depression

Risk Factors for Depression

- + Distressing and uncontrollable event
- + Exposure to stressful life events
- + Difficult childhood
- + Ongoing stress and anxiety
- + Another mental illness
- + Previous episode of depression
- + Family history
- + More sensitive emotional nature

Risk Factors for Depression

- + Illness that is life threatening, chronic, or associated with pain
- + Medical conditions
- + Side effects of medication
- + Recent childbirth
- + Premenstrual changes in hormone levels
- + Lack of exposure to bright light in winter
- + Chemical (neurotransmitter) imbalance
- + Substance misuse



How to Help

The most common crises to assess for with depressive symptoms are:

- + Suicidal thoughts and behaviors
- + Nonsuicidal self-injury



Suicide Risk Assessment

- + Gender
- + Age
- + Chronic physical illness
- + Mental illness
- + Use of alcohol or other substances
- + Less social support
- + Previous attempt
- + Organized plan



Warning Signs of Suicide

- + Threatening to hurt or kill oneself
- + Seeking access to means
- + Talking or writing about death, dying, or suicide
- + Feeling hopeless
- + Feeling worthless or a lack of purpose
- + Acting recklessly or engaging in risky activities
- + Feeling trapped
- + Increasing alcohol or drug use
- + Withdrawing from family, friends, or society
- + Demonstrating rage and anger or seeking revenge
- + Appearing agitated
- + Having a dramatic change in mood



How to Help a Person Who May be Suicidal

- + Have a conversation: discuss your concerns, ask them directly whether they are suicidal and whether they have a plan
 - “Are you having thoughts of suicide?”
 - “How are you thinking of harming yourself?”
- + Ensure your safety and their safety
 - Do not leave an actively suicidal person alone
- + Try to involve them in decision making about connecting to professional help or other supports
- + If you have serious concerns, call 911 or the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK.



How to Help: Non-Suicidal Self Injury

- + Assist the person by letting him or her know you are concerned and are willing to help.
- + Recognize that self-injury is usually a symptom of serious psychological distress.
- + Let the person know that treatment is available for this distress.
- + Ensure that the person knows where professional mental health care is available.
- + Encourage, but **do not** force, the person to seek professional treatment.

How to Help: Treatments Available

- + Supportive counseling
 - Providing emotional support & teaching problem-solving skills.
- + Psychological Therapies
 - Cognitive behavioral therapy, stress management, interpersonal psychotherapy
- + Medical Treatment
 - Medication, electroconvulsive therapy (ECT)
- + Peer & Community support
 - Friends, family, faith networks, support groups
- + Self-Help strategies
 - Exercise, CBT based books, relaxation therapy, light therapy



Questions on Depression & Suicide?

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Mental Health First Aid in your Community



- + Visit www.MentalHealthFirstAid.org for further information on the course and to find an instructor near you.
- + Become a fan of Mental Health First Aid USA on Facebook & get updates and information on a variety of mental health topics.
- + For any further questions, contact Bryan Gibb at bryang@thenationalcouncil.org or Susan Partain at susanp@thenationalcouncil.org or 202.684.3732.

More in the Understanding Mental Illness Webcast Series



Visit www.MentalHealthFirstAid.org for an audio recording and Powerpoint of today's webcast.

- + May 12 Understanding Anxiety Disorders
- + May 19 Understanding Psychosis
- + May 26 Understanding Substance Use Disorders

5 – 6 pm Eastern; 4 – 5 pm Central; 3 – 4 pm Mountain; 2 – 3 pm Pacific

Today's attendees are not required to register again for these webcasts.