

Understanding Depression



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Today's Presenter



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Depression

Everyone feels sad, fed up or miserable sometimes.



But for some people, depression goes on for longer, and becomes so severe that they find it hard to carry on with their normal lives.

Duff D. Depression in the workplace. 2013.

Depression is a Bio-Psycho-Social-Genetic Disease

- At least 10% of people will experience depression in their lifetime.
- Two times as many women experience depression as men.
- Genetics play a role.
- Early adverse childhood experiences are pre-cursors to depression.
- If a parent or sibling has depression it increases risk by 20-30% rather than the average (10%).
- Each person inherits a unique set of genes from their mother and father which may pre-dispose them to depression.

Levison D. Stanford School of Medicine. 2005

Depression Among Youth

- Most mental health disorders begin in childhood or adolescence
- Estimated 3.2 million youth, aged 12-17, had at least one major depressive episode within the past year.
 - This is approximately 13.3% of the U.S. population aged 12-17.
- Highest prevalence (16.9%) of a major depressive episode was highest amongst youth of two or more races
- In 2017, **31% of high school students** reported feeling sad or hopeless almost every day for 2+ weeks in a row. An increase from 2015.
- Youth of lower socioeconomic status are disproportionately impacted by depression

National Institute on Mental Health. February 2019.

<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics/major-depression.shtml>

Depression

A mood disorder characterized by persistent sadness or inability to experience pleasure combined with other symptoms including poor concentration, indecisiveness, sleep problems, changes in appetite, and feelings of guilt, helplessness, and hopelessness.

- American Heritage Medical Dictionary

Major depressive disorder lasts for at least 2 weeks and affects a person's...

- Emotions, thinking, behavior, and physical well-being
- Ability to work/study and have satisfying relationships
- Change in functioning

Major Depressive Disorder

Has at least five of the following:

- Depressed mood most of the day, nearly every day
- Loss of interest in pleasurable activities
- Significant weight change or change in appetite
- Psychomotor agitation or retardation
- Change in sleep
- Fatigue and loss of energy
- Guilt and/or worthlessness
- Diminished concentration, indecisiveness
- Thoughts of suicide

Not due to another medical condition or effects of a substance

Other Types of Depression

- Depression with Atypical Features
- With Peripartum Onset
- Depression with seasonal pattern
- Persistent Depressive Disorder
- Bipolar Disorder
- Bereavement



Patient Health Questionnaire 9 Modified for Adolescents (PHQ-A)

Instructions: How often have you been bothered by each of the following symptoms during the past two weeks ? For each symptom put an "X" in the box beneath the answer that best describes how you have been feeling.				
	(0) Not at all	(1) Several days	(2) More than half the days	(3) Nearly every day
1. Feeling down, depressed, irritable, or hopeless?				
2. Little interest or pleasure in doing things?				
3. Trouble falling asleep, staying asleep, or sleeping too much?				
4. Poor appetite, weight loss, or overeating?				
5. Feeling tired, or having little energy?				
6. Feeling bad about yourself – or feeling that you are a failure, or that you have let yourself or your family down?				
7. Trouble concentrating on things like school work, reading, or watching TV?				
8. Moving or speaking so slowly that other people could have noticed? Or the opposite – being so fidgety or restless that you were moving around a lot more than usual?				
9. Thoughts that you would be better off dead, or of hurting yourself in some way?				

Signs and Symptoms of Depression

Signs

What we may see

Weight change

Withdrawal from others

Irritability

Changes in self-care/appearance

Personality change

Tearfulness

Indecisiveness/confusion

Disorganization

Forgetfulness

Self-criticism

Symptoms

What someone may feel

Sadness/anxiety

Low energy

Sleep disturbance

Appetite change

Headaches

Pessimism

Loss of sexual desire

Unexplained aches and pains

Hopelessness

Helplessness

Thoughts of death and suicide

Behaviors of Depression

1. Depressed mood (sadness, emptiness, hopelessness, crying) most all day, most every day.
2. No or nearly no interest in pleasure or activities, most all day, most every day. (Anhedonia)
3. Significant loss of appetite with unplanned weight loss ($\geq 5\%$)
4. Too much or too little sleep, insomnia or hypersomnia
5. Significant activity slowing or irritability

American Psychiatric Association. *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders*. 2013. 5th ed. Washington D.C.: American Psychiatric Publishing.

Behaviors of Depression

6. Continuous low energy and/or fatigue
7. Feeling of excessive guilt (may be delusional) or worthlessness.
8. Less ability to concentrate or make decisions most all day, most every day.
9. Thoughts of death: suicidal ideation with or without a plan

The above may be subjective or observed by others. The above may not be normal reactions to significant loss

What can help in school?

- Raising awareness of mental health conditions
- Promoting well-being
- Identifying the early warning signs and talking at an early stage
- Keeping in touch during sickness absence
- Occupational health
- Considering reasonable adjustments
- Ongoing support and review

Duff C. Depression in the workplace. 2013

What can you do to help or advise



- Help the person to feel hope and optimism
- Understand that depression is common
- Depression is a real medical condition
- Effective help is available

Duff C. Depression in the workplace. 2013

Encourage Appropriate Professional Help

Types of Professionals

- Doctors (primary care physicians)
- Nurse Practitioners
- Psychiatrists
- Psychologists, social workers, counselors, and other mental health professionals
- Certified peer specialists
- Certified drug and alcohol counselors

Types of Professional Help

- “Talk” therapies
- Medication
- Group therapy
- Other professional supports (complimentary medicine)

Self Help and Other Support Strategies

 Nutrition – anti-inflammatory diet

 Movement (exercise, yoga, aikido, Qi Gong, Tai Chi, etc.)

 Complementary Medicine (acupuncture, massage, etc.)

 Meditation

 Connection with others (loneliness can be lethal)

 Journaling

 Relaxation techniques

Thank you!

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