

# DEPRESSION

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# MYTHS ABOUT DEPRESSION

- Depression is not a real medical illness.
- Even if depression is a medical illness, there's nothing that can be done about it.
- Depression is no different from getting the "blues"—this is just a normal part of life.
- People that think they are depressed are just feeling sorry for themselves.
- You can will depression away. If you can't, you are weak.



# DEPRESSION MYTHS

- Depression will go away by itself.
- Depression is a normal part of getting older.
- Depression only affects women.
- Depression does not affect children or teenagers, their problems are just a part of growing up.
- If someone in your family suffers from depression, you will inherit it.



# WHAT IS DEPRESSION?

- Depression is a medical illness that involves the mind and body. It affects how a person feels, thinks and behaves.
- Major depression is the leading cause of disability in the US and many other developed countries.
- Depression can lead to a variety of emotional and physical problems. People may have trouble doing normal day-to-day activities, and depression may make them feel as if life isn't worth living.
- Most people with depression feel better with medication, psychological counseling or other treatment.



# TYPES OF DEPRESSION

Major Depression  
Chronic (Dysthymia)  
Postpartum  
Bipolar (Manic Depression)  
SAD (Seasonal Affective Disorder)  
Psychotic



# SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF DEPRESSION



- Feelings of sadness or unhappiness.
- Irritability or frustration, even over small matters.
- Loss of interest or pleasure in normal activities.
- Reduced sex drive.
- Insomnia or excessive sleeping.
- Changes in appetite.
- Slowed thinking, speaking or body movements.
- Fatigue, tiredness and loss of energy — even small tasks may seem to require a lot of effort.
- Frequent thoughts of death, dying or suicide.



# CAUSES

- There is no single cause for depression.
- Can be triggered or it may occur spontaneously.

## Factors that contribute:

Trauma – trauma experienced at an early age

Genetics – mood disorders and risk for suicide runs in family but is only one factor.

Other medical conditions and drug and alcohol abuse.



# CAUSES

- **Life Circumstances – Transitions are difficult. Situations are challenging.**
- **Brain structure – Scientists believe that if there is a chemical imbalance in neurotransmitters, serotonin, norepinephrine, and dopamine, clinical states of depression result.**





# WHO IS AT RISK?

People of all ages, races, ethnic and socioeconomic groups.

- Men – May feel more shame. Depressed men are 4x more likely to die by suicide.
- Women – Genetics, biology, reproduction, hormone changes, interpersonal relationships.
- Women after childbirth – 9-16%



# MORE AT RISK

- Seniors – Often go untreated. Depression is NOT a normal part of aging. Can cause memory problems, vague complaints of pain, side effect of meds.
- LGBTQ – Due to facing discrimination from society, family, coworkers, & classmates.
- Children and teens – Children experience fluctuations in emotions. ‘Downs’ are not commonplace and are a sign. May complain of pain, be aggressive, engage in risky behavior. Suicide is 3<sup>rd</sup> leading cause of death among children aged 15-19.



# DIAGNOSIS

- A person is diagnosed by a trained health care professional.
- Diagnosed if signs and symptoms last for longer than 2 weeks.
- Diagnosis is complicated because depression may be the swing side of bipolar disorder, another mental illness.
- It is important to consider backgrounds and family history.



# TREATMENT OF DEPRESSION

Medications: (Antidepressants)

SSRI, SNRI, MAOI's and Tricyclic

Psychotherapy.

Brain stimulation therapies (ECT).

Light therapy.

Exercise, healthy lifestyle and diet.

Alternative therapies (acupuncture, meditation, nutrition).

Self-management strategies and education.

Mind/Body/Spirit approaches such as meditation, faith, and prayer.

Depression CANNOT be cured and CAN be treated effectively.



# TREATMENT OF DEPRESSION

- Therapeutic Communication
  - Listening
  - Validation
  - Reflection
  - Clarification
- Complementary and alternative therapy
  - Music
  - Meditation
  - Art
  - Journaling
  - Prayer



# THINGS TO REMEMBER

Depression is real.

Ask for help.

Impacts all races, cultures, ages, backgrounds.

16 million American adults – almost 7% of the population – had at least 1 major depressive episode last year.

If depression is left untreated, it can be devastating, both for the people who have it and for their families.

80-90% of those diagnosed can be effectively treated and return to usual daily activities and feelings.



# HELPING YOURSELF & LOVED ONES

- Lead a balanced life as depression is managed.
- Learn all you can about:
  - Medications.
  - Treatment options.
  - Attend support groups.
  - Network with those around you.
  - Recognize early symptoms.
  - Partner with your health care provider.
  - Know what to do in a crisis.
  - Avoid drugs and alcohol.
  - Eat well and exercise.



# SOME PEARLS OF WISDOM

Grief is a normal yet painful human experience.

We are not meant to walk this life alone.

We need other people in our lives to help keep us accountable.

Medications and other therapeutic options can bring wellness.

Humans have incredible inner strength.





# EMPATHY



# SHOWING EMPATHY

We can't fix it so...empathize!

Remember that Depression is an Illness, NOT a  
Weakness!

Be **EMPATHIC** to those who struggle!



**Thank you for coming!**



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