

DEPRESSION

Everyone experiences occasional feelings of sadness or the blues. These emotions are a normal part of life. When these feelings become overwhelming and begin to interfere with our ability to function normally is what we refer to as Depression. Depression can cause suffering not just for the person affected, but for those that are closest to them. Fortunately, a lot has become known about depression, is becoming more easily recognized by everyone including doctors, and better treatments are available. Learning about depression is the first step in helping yourself or someone you might know.

There are numerous symptoms that are often associated with depression. Most depressed people are sad, worried, irritable, and anxious that terrible things are going to happen. Most have low self-esteem and think poorly about themselves. When this becomes severe, one might think that life is not worth living and this could lead them to hurting themselves. Anyone talking about harming themselves should always be taken seriously. One of the first signs that someone might be depressed is a change in a person's usual behavior. Other common signs of depression include: loss of interest in what used to be pleasurable activities, dissatisfaction with life, withdrawal from social activities, loss of energy, decreased interest in sex, great concerns with health problems, sadness, crying, constant worry, difficulty concentrating or making decisions, not sleeping, loss of appetite or weight, and substance abuse (alcohol, smoking, illegal drugs, medicines).

Depression can occur at any age and in both men and women. There are several factors that are thought to be the cause of depression. It can be triggered by an upsetting life event like loss of job, break up in a relationship, or death of a close one. Heredity seems to play a role as there are often several people in one family that suffers from depression. New studies are revealing that imbalances in brain chemicals are responsible for depression. Other causes include several medical illnesses, medications and alcohol.

Anyone suffering from depression needs to realize they have a problem and seek help as soon as possible. With a proper diagnosis and treatment, one can feel better and lead a normal life. If you have a family member or close friend that you suspect is suffering from depression, urge them to get help. Because depression can affect the whole family, learning more about depression and how to help someone that is depressed is helpful. There are many helpful treatments available. Individual or group counseling is often helpful for those affected and their families and friends. Numerous medications are often used in treatment of depression that have no or minimal side effects. There is help out there so if you think you might be depressed, see your doctor as soon as possible for help.