


Dealing with Depression

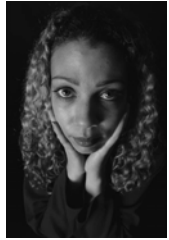


Dealing with Depression

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Wellspring Institute for Healthy Living
The Prevention Series

What is depression?

Depression is a serious medical condition that affects thoughts, feelings, and ability to function in every day life.



National Institute of Mental Health, 2005

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PET Brain Scan in Healthy Compared to a Depressed Person

Serotonin 1A Receptor Binding Potential

High

Low

Healthy Individual

Individual With Bipolar Disorder (Depressed Phase)

Mesiotemporal Cortex

Raphe Nucleus of Midbrain

R L R L

JAMA, April 10, 2002

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Symptoms of Depression


- Persistent sad, anxious, or empty mood
- Loss of interest in hobbies and activities they used to enjoy
- Feelings of hopelessness, pessimism, and worthlessness
- Physical symptoms: sleep problems, appetite, energy levels, sexual function, motivation, and often a variety of aches and pains

National Institute of Mental Health, 2005

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Prevalence of Depression

- 12 month rate is 6.6%
- Lifetime rate is 16.2%
- Only 1/4th of depressed people are receiving adequate treatment




JAMA. 2003;289:3169-70

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Depression Awareness Needed

- 20 million Americans are affected by depression yearly.
- “Depression is a major public health problem that calls for awareness on the part of virtually all physicians.”



JAMA. 2003;289:3169-70, and the National Institute of Mental Health


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Dealing with Depression

Depression Costs Years-of-Life

Disability Adjusted Life Years*

In Millions

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Ischemic heart disease | 9.0 |  |
| 2. Major depression | 6.8 | |
| 3. Other cardiovascular disease | 5.0 | |
| 4. Alcohol use | 4.7 | |
| 5. Road traffic accidents | 4.4 | |

*Disability-adjusted life years express years of life lost to premature death and years lived with a disability of specified severity and duration.

Global Burden of Disease Study, Murray & Lopez, 1996

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Economic Cost of Depression

- Lost productivity time alone costs \$44 billion/year.
- Depression is the second leading cause of disability worldwide.



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Screening for Depression

- The Preventive Services Task Force recommends doctors screen all patients for depression.
- To begin with, they recommend two simple screening questions:
 1. "During the past 2 weeks, have you felt down, depressed, or hopeless?"
 2. "During the past 2 weeks, have you felt little interest or pleasure in doing things?"

JAMA. 2003;289:3169-70

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Depression Screening

- A "Yes" response to either of the two questions indicates need for further screening.
- Complete a more thorough assessment such as the "Depression Self-Test"



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Depression Symptoms

A check-list of symptoms for self-evaluation

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Depression Treatment

- If depression is identified:
 - Education was found to be ineffective
 - Effective strategies included:
 - Medication therapy
 - Psychotherapy (talking therapy)
- Refer to a doctor or mental health counselor for diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up
- Overcome treatment obstacles
 - - Feelings of hopelessness and worthlessness
 - - Stigma about mental disorder or treatment

JAMA. 2003;289:3169-70

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Dealing with Depression

How Depression Affects Health

- Brain
- Body

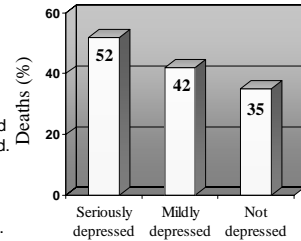


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Depression Erodes Health

In a study of 1,250 people who survived a heart attack, researchers found that 10 years later...

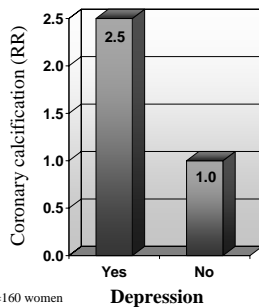
- Over 50% of those who were seriously depressed after the heart attack died.
- 42% of those who were mildly depressed died.
- Only 35% of those who were not depressed died.



Source: *Am J of Cardiology*, July 1997

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Depression and Coronary Risk



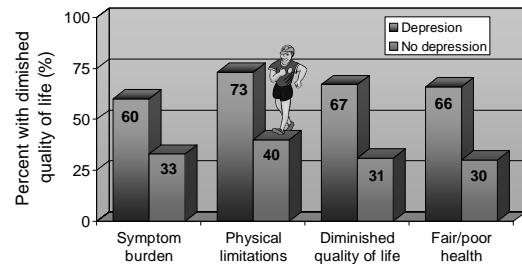
n=160 women

- Depression is an independent risk factor for early atherosclerosis in women
- Depression increased the risk of coronary calcification (early sign of atherosclerosis) by 2-3 times.

Arch Intern Med. 2005;165:1229-36

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Depression and Quality of Life in People with Heart Disease



n=1024

Measures of Health Status

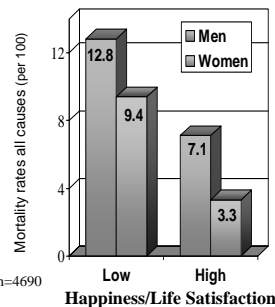
JAMA 290:215-221, July 9, 2003

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A Happy Mind Promotes Health

- Happiness and life satisfaction are strong predictors of long life
- In the Alameda County study, unhappy people had a mortality rate 2-3 times those who were happy and satisfied with life.

Source: Alameda County Study



n=4690

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How lifestyle impacts depression

- Exercise
- Nutrition
- Social relationships



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Exercise and Depression

- Study of 156 sedentary, clinically depressed persons
- Subjects were randomly divided into two groups:
 - One group received medication therapy
 - Another group only ran at a moderate pace ½ hour daily
- After 16 weeks their depression was reevaluated
 - Exercisers improved as much as those on medication
 - Only exercisers showed improvement in mental abilities such as concentration, planning, and organization



Source: Duke University, 2001

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Walking Prevents Mental Decline

- A study of 5,925 people age 65 plus
- Tested mental acuity at start and end of study
- People who walked the least (less than ½ mile per day) had the most mental decline
- People who walked the most (18 miles per week) had the least mental decline
- The chance of mental decline decreased 13% for every extra mile walked
- Researcher's summary, "Exercise, such as walking, is one of the best ways to preserve your mental ability."



Study presented at Amer. Academy of Neurology annual meeting, May 9, 2001

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Nutrition and Depression

- Tufts University studied depression and blood folate levels in 3,000 people
 - Those reporting major depression:
 - *Feeling worthless*
 - *Difficulty concentrating*
 - *Loss of energy*
 - *Changes in appetite and sleep patterns, etc.*
 - Had significantly lower blood folate levels than people who had never been depressed
 - Previous research showed folate did help improve the condition and also helped antidepressants work better
- n-3 fatty acids may also help protect against depression

Tufts University Health and Nutrition Letter, Aug. 2003

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Coping with Depression

Depression can make you feel like giving up. Negative thinking begins to fade with treatment. Until then try these tips for coping with depression.



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Feeling overwhelmed?

- Set some priorities
- Be realistic
- Break large tasks into small ones
- Do what you can
- Don't be hard on yourself

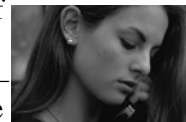


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Feeling antisocial?

- Try to be with other people at least part of the time.
- Confide in someone – talking with someone can help even if it's on the phone.
- It's usually better than being all alone.



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Participate in activities that make you feel better

- Go for a walk, someplace pleasant, exercise improves mood.
- Go to a movie, ball game, or concert.
- Participate in a church service or other social meeting.
- Spend time in the bright sunshine daily.



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Don't skip meals

- Take time to eat a warm meal daily.
- Choose nutritious meals – the brain needs good nutrition to help it recover.



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Avoid alcohol and drugs

- Alcohol is a depressant.
- Drinking can become a dependency and is a common cause of depression.
- Drug use also leads to depression.



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Postpone important decisions

- Don't make important decisions when you are feeling down such as changing jobs, getting divorced, or quitting school.
- Discuss it with others who know you well – they will be more objective.



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Stay connected with family

- Don't cut yourself off from family.
- Let your family and friends help you.
- Social support is vital for good mental health, especially when feeling depressed.



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Be hopeful

- Remember, as your depression responds to treatment, positive thinking will replace negative thinking.
- Your negative thoughts are part of depression.



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Resources for Depression

- National Foundation for Depressive Illness
www.depression.org 800/239-1265
- National Institute of Mental Health
www.nimh.nih.gov 800-64-PANIC
- National Depressive and Manic-Dep. Assoc.
www.ndmda.org 800/826-3632
- Emotions Anonymous
www.emotionsAnonymous.org 612/647-9712
- GalaxoSmithKline site
www.depression.com
- National Mental Health Association
www.nmha.org 800/969-6642

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