

# Why is Mental Health Important for us



## Let's talk about depression like any other disease

### What is the cause of depression?

Although scientists agree that depression is a brain disorder, the debate continues about its exact causes. Many factors may contribute to the onset of depression, including:



**Genetic characteristics** - A family history of depression may increase the risk. It's thought that there are many different genes that each exert small effects, rather than a single gene that contributes to the disease risk.



**Substance abuse** - Nearly 30% of people with substance abuse problems also have major or clinical depression.



#### **Prolonged stress, due to:**

- **Abuse.** Past physical or emotional abuse can increase the vulnerability to clinical depression later in life.
- **Grief** due to death or loss of a person
- **Major life events.** Moving, losing a job, getting divorced, or retiring, among others.
- **Conflict.** Depression in someone who has the biological vulnerability to develop it may result from personal conflicts or disputes with family members or friends.
- **Other personal problems.** Such as social isolation.



#### **Other medical conditions** -

Sometimes depression co-exists with a major illness or may be triggered by another medical condition.

Any of these factors alone or in combination can bring about the specific changes in brain chemistry that lead to the many symptoms of depression, bipolar disorder and related conditions.

## Did you know

**Depression is more than just “feeling down.” It is a serious illness caused by changes in the brain chemistry.**

- Depression is the leading cause of disability worldwide, and a major contributor to the overall global burden of disease.
- Roughly 1 in 5 women, and 1 in 10 men, are affected by depression at some point in their lifetime. 1
- At its worst, depression can lead to suicide.
- There are effective treatments for depression.



## Treating Depression

The problems caused by depression are made worse by the fact that most people suffering from the disease are never diagnosed, let alone treated.

The good news is that when depression is promptly identified and treated, its symptoms are manageable and there are many effective strategies for living with the disease.

### MEDICATION:

Beware the myth that medication can just be replaced by positive thinking or just changing one's mood by going out and “having fun”. ***When a chemical imbalance in the brain is involved, intervention to restore that balance through medication is often crucial.***

If you have severe depression, you may need a hospital stay, or to participate in an outpatient treatment program until your symptoms improve.

### PSYCHOTHERAPY:

Also known as “talk therapy” or “psychological therapy”. Psychotherapy, depending on the cause of depression and its type, may be the single course of treatment or used in combination with medication. Psychotherapy can help:

- Identify issues that contribute to depression
- Identify negative beliefs and behaviors and replace them with healthy, positive ones
- Develop positive interactions with others
- Regain a sense of satisfaction and control

### OTHER TREATMENT OPTIONS:

Also called brain stimulation therapies or “**neuromodulation**”, may be suggested:

- Electroconvulsive therapy (ECT). In ECT, electrical currents are passed through the brain to impact the function and effect of neurotransmitters in the brain to relieve depression.
- Transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS). During TMS, a treatment coil placed against the scalp sends brief magnetic pulses to stimulate nerve cells in your brain that are involved in mood regulation and depression.

Neuromodulation techniques have been approved by the Food and Drug Administration for patients who have not found relief with other treatment approaches (a condition known as treatment resistant depression, or TRD)

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