



MENTAL HEALTH EDUCATION RESOURCE CENTRE MANITOBA

Fact Sheet | Depression

Depression is a common mood disorder that can have a serious impact on a person's life and self-concept. Depression can make a person feel sad, guilty, worthless, angry and/or hopeless or numb. A person living with depression may also feel physically tired, have a loss of appetite or experience trouble sleeping. A person who is experiencing depression is at a higher risk for suicide.

An estimated 1 in 4 Canadians will be diagnosed with a type of depression in their lifetime. The majority of people who have depression will respond very well to help which can take the form of counselling, peer support, psychotherapy, self-help groups, mindfulness practice, medication or a combination of these.

Depression, through the life span, can evolve during the teenage years and then early adulthood when people are going through many life changes. Older adults may be susceptible to depression due to losses, illness, and changes in roles and relationships. Twice as many women as men report problems with depression. Women can be affected by post-partum depression during child bearing years.

People experiencing the challenges of depression may also live with anxiety (nervousness, fears, worries) or with substance misuse (alcohol or drugs) or behaviours like problem gambling or excessive shopping.

Causes of depression are complex. Sometimes depression is attributed to a person's biology which means it could be inherited through family genes.



Some medical professionals treat depression as a chemical imbalance in the brain and use psychotropic medications to treat the condition. Others consider depression to be a result of the psychological and/or social environment of an individual. The circumstances under which a person grew up or reactions to current issues are a part of this orientation. Childhood trauma, abuse, addiction, poverty, social isolation or discrimination and other factors can contribute to the onset of depression in children and adults.

Symptoms of depression include:

- Feeling bad about yourself
- Changes in sleep patterns
- Changes in appetite or weight
- Feeling overwhelmed by pessimism, anger, guilt, irritability and anxiety
- Varying emotions throughout the day – for example, feeling worse in the morning and better as the day progresses
- Inability to enjoy life
- Reduced interested in sex
- Reduced pain tolerance
- Poor concentration and memory
- Low motivation to do things that used to matter to you
- Feeling exhausted

When to seek help for depression:

If symptoms of depression are severe, last for two weeks or more, and affect functioning at home or at work, you may need to see a health professional. Having one or two symptoms by themselves is unlikely to indicate depression. However, there could be physical causes for your symptoms which may need medical assessment.

Help for Depression:

There are a wide range of psycho/social/medical treatments for depression.

The main ones include:

- cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT)
- mindfulness meditation
- psychotherapy/psychiatrist or psychologist
- counselling
- medications
- self-help and peer support

CBT, Mindfulness Meditation, psychotherapy and counselling all provide either an alternative to medication for certain types of depression, or work alongside medication.



As always, a thorough psycho/social and/or medical assessment is needed in order to decide on the best combination of approaches.

Points to remember:

- Occasionally feeling depressed or down is a common experience.
- Professional healthcare advice should be sought if feelings of depression are severe, last for two weeks or more, and day-to-day functioning is impaired.
- If feeling suicidal, seek immediate help by calling the crisis helpline listed below or speaking to your GP, psychologist or psychiatrist.

References and Links:

<http://healthgov.on.ca/en/public/publications/mental/depression.aspx>

<https://www.camh.ca/en/driving-change/the-crisis-is-real/mental-health-statistics>

<https://cmha.ca/fast-facts-about-mental-illness>

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/chronic-diseases/mental-illness/what-depression.html>

<https://www.150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/82-003-x/2017001/article/14697-eng.htm>

Community Supports and Resources

CANADIAN MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

CMHA Manitoba and Winnipeg Phone Line | 204-982-6100

CMHA Service Navigation Hub | 204-775-6442

MOOD DISORDERS ASSOCIATION OF MANITOBA

100 – 4 Fort Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba | 204-786-0987 or toll free 1-800-263-1460

Postpartum Warmline | 204-391-5983

MANITOBA GOVERNMENT INQUIRY (Regional Mental Health)

This service provides information and referral to provincial government services | 1-866-626-4862 or 204-945-3744 | www.gov.mb.ca

MANITOBA SUICIDE PREVENTION

& SUPPORT LINE | 1-877-435-7170

