

Your Health Reference Sheet

Topic: Depression

By Carol Ritberger, PhD, Medical Intuitive

Almost everyone, at some time in their life, experiences the ups and downs responsible for those bouts of the blues or those feelings of sadness and melancholy. Perhaps they're triggered by the loss of a loved one, the loss of a job, the loss of a friend, the loss of financial security, or the loss of a beloved pet. Maybe they're triggered by watching the news or even reading the paper where the focus is on the economic crisis, the state of the environment, or the human suffering associated with war. No matter what triggers these feelings, the response is similar. We're emotionally affected and may even find ourselves wanting to crawl into bed and pull the covers over our head. However, these feelings aren't truly depression. They are momentary emotional mood swings associated with the challenges life presents us and with the stress and press of life. And, while depression may share the same feelings, it's very different both in how it affects the brain and the body, and the quality of a person's life.

True depression is much more serious than those temporary feelings of sadness, sorrow, or disappointment. Depression, as an illness, isn't a normal reaction to the challenges we face. It's a profound and persistent sadness, which can happen without any connection to an external cause. It's what occurs when a person's perception of present conditions and future possibilities is so intolerable that they find themselves quitting or just plain giving up. Depression causes a person to boycott life to the point that they participate less and less and lose their connection with what interested them. It causes them to feel like they have abandoned themselves and that others have abandoned them as well. The result is they isolate themselves. Depression skews the way we think and behave, often damaging our physical health as well as our emotional well-being.

Depression is an equal opportunity illness. It strikes people of all ages and races, male and female, and all socioeconomic groups. It's particularly prevalent among people who are demoralized and who are under prolonged stress related to everyday survival. Overall, the costs of depression in the United States are an estimated \$43 billion per year, and only about 10 percent of that is associated with outpatient treatment. Depression is responsible for a \$23 billion loss of revenue each year for businesses because of lower productivity and absenteeism at work. Annually, it costs approximately \$12.3 billion for the medical and psychiatric care of depression. And, people who suffer from depression have two and a half times more physical problems and chronic illnesses, four times the normal mortality rate, and 63 percent higher incidents of cardiovascular ailments, than those who don't suffer from depression.

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The information expresses a holistic and energetic perspective of illness and isn't intended to replace professional medical advice and care. Please consult a medical professional or a qualified practitioner if you have any health concerns.