

MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

Every month CARP Halton will feature a Mental Health segment. This segment will feature agencies, groups, presentations, articles, tips and more to enrich your Mental Health whether it is having the blues or being anxious or being in crisis. Most common among mental health concerns are depression and anxiety. Let's explore depression and adults:

DEPRESSION OVERVIEW

Clinical depression is a medical condition that goes beyond everyday sadness. Depression may cause serious, long-lasting symptoms and often disrupts a person's ability to perform routine tasks. The disorder is the most common psychiatric disorder worldwide.

The treatment of depression is important because people with untreated depression have a lower quality of life, a higher risk of suicide, and worse physical outcomes if they have any medical conditions besides depression. In fact, people with depression are almost twice as likely to die as people without the condition. What's more, depression affects not only the people with the disorder but also those around them.

DEFINITION OF DEPRESSION

When people talk about depression, they're usually referring to what health care providers call "unipolar major depression" (or major depressive disorder).

Common signs and symptoms of depression include:

- Persistent sad, anxious, or "empty" mood

- Feelings of hopelessness or pessimism
- Feelings of irritability, frustration, or restlessness
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, or helplessness
- Loss of interest or pleasure in hobbies and activities
- Fatigue, lack of energy, or feeling slowed down
- Difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions
- Difficulty sleeping, waking too early in the morning, or oversleeping
- Changes in appetite or unplanned weight changes
- Physical aches or pains, headaches, cramps, or digestive problems without a clear physical cause that do not go away with treatment
- Thoughts of death or suicide or suicide attempts

Depression can also involve other changes in mood or behaviour that include:

- Increased anger or irritability
- Feeling restless or on edge
- Becoming withdrawn, negative, or detached
- Increased engagement in high-risk activities
- Greater impulsivity
- Increased use of alcohol or drugs
- Isolating from family and friends
- Inability to meet responsibilities or ignoring other important roles
- Problems with sexual desire and performance

Briefly, to be diagnosed with unipolar major depression, a person must have five or more of the above symptoms present most of the day nearly every day for at least two weeks in a row. For the

diagnosis, at least one symptom must be either depressed mood or loss of interest or pleasure.

If you identify with these symptoms contact your doctor. Don't hesitate. Remember that there is no shame in being depressed. Depression is real and treatable.

- Patient education: Depression and adults

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