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Understanding and Coping with Depression

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(Texas Child Health Through Telemedicine)



Types of Depression

- Depressive disorders include:
- **Disruptive mood dysregulation:** in children refers to persistent irritability and frequent episodes of extreme behavioral dyscontrol.
- **Major depressive disorder:** condition characterized by persistently depressed mood or loss of interest in activities, causing significant impairment in daily life lasting for at least 2 weeks period.
- **Dysthymia:** chronic form of depression lasting for at least 1 year.
- **Substance/medication-induced depressive disorder:** depression developed during or soon after substance intoxication or withdrawal or after exposure to a medication.



Symptoms of Depression

- The common feature of all of these disorders is the presence of sad, empty, or irritable mood, accompanied by somatic and cognitive changes that significantly affect individual's capacity to function.
- In order to be diagnosed with depression, children and adolescents must exhibit five or more symptoms for at least two weeks. These symptoms are sadness, hopelessness, fatigue or loss of energy, feeling of worthlessness or excessive guilt, insomnia or hypersomnia, significant weight loss or weight gain, low self-esteem, recurrent thoughts of death (suicide) and/or self-harm.



Causes of Depression

- Response to a significant loss (bereavement, financial loss, losses from natural disaster, disability, etc.)
- Substance abuse (heroin, alcohol, marijuana)
- Genetics (family history of depression)
- Trauma (history of emotional, physical or sexual abuse)
- Medical problems (cancer, diabetes, dementia)
- Pain (constant pain and discomfort)



Treatments of Depression

- The course of treatment depends on the type of depressive disorder. Medications, individual or group therapy, lifestyle changes, or a combination of all 3 can usually relieve symptoms of depression.
- Examples of medications that are commonly used to treat depressed mood include Escitalopram (Lexapro), Venlafaxine (Effexor), Latuda (Lurasidone), Cymbalta (Duloxetine), Abilify (Aripiprazole), and many more.
- Examples of therapeutic modalities that are commonly used to treat depression are Cognitive-Behavioral therapy (CBT), Cognitive-Processing therapy (CPT), and Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR).



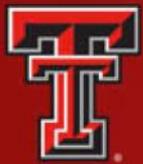
Coping with Depression

- Understand your child's symptoms.
- Seek treatment (therapy, psychiatry/medications).
- Educate yourself and your child about depression.
- Explore available options (community treatment, hospitalization).
- Set clear expectations (home, school, etc).
- Help your child build a support system (family, friends).
- Help your child reduce stress (exercise, mindfulness).
- Help your child improve sleep hygiene (no electronics, shower, essential oils).
- Improve eating habits (healthy diet).
- Stop procrastination.



Coping with Depression

- Self-help methods for the treatment of depression may be helpful for someone who is unable to access professional resources or to someone with mild symptoms. Self-help strategies may include the following:
 - **Support groups:** They allow children and adolescents to talk to other people who can relate to the issues and symptoms they are experiencing. Many people report support groups to reassure them that they are not alone and provide them with ideas and resources.
 - **Online resources:** There are many websites, newsletters, and online programs that specifically help people with depression.
 - **Self-help books:** Books can offer many of the same skills that people gain in therapy but it requires readers to be able to apply the information to their own lives. Many self-help books are available for free through local libraries



Resources

- If your child or anyone you love is in crisis help is just a step away.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255 for support and assistance from a trained counselor.

Local Crisis Line at 915-779-1800

If you or a loved one are in immediate danger, call **911**



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Questions