

INFORMATION ON DEPRESSION

Depression means a state of mind, in which one feels bad and anxious and finds the whole life desperate. When a person is depressed, he/she is hardly able to take delight in anything. A depressed person has difficulties to start doing something and he/she becomes easily tired. Decision taking is often difficult as well as concentration on studying or reading.

A person suffering of depression has difficulties to sleep. Waking up in the early hours is common. Sometimes falling asleep is hard or sleep may be light and disconnected. Or excessive sleeping may be a symptom of depression. Lack of appetite and loss of weight may also be linked to depression or sometimes a depressed person may eat too much.

A depressed person is often peevish and may have difficulties to stay in others' company. Excessive feeling of guilt may also be usual. Thoughts linked to death and suicide are common by a person suffering of depression. Various physical pains like headache, muscular pains, stomach- and backache are usual and they do not have any organic cause.

What does cause depression?

Depression starts in situations with great changes in life. Depression may be preceded by a situation, in which one has to abandon important close people or things like a job or a flat. Sometimes depression comes from situations, in which one should cope with great challenges, but resources seem to be insufficient. Such challenges can be, for example, moving to a new place, adapting a new culture and learning a new language.

Some people get more easily depressed than others. That can come from genetic factors or characteristics. Depression can also be connected to changes in cerebration. Generally those changes are recovered and normalized once depression has been overcome.

How is depression treated?

In case of long lasting depression that handicaps everyday activities, it is good to look for help. You can discuss about it with your nurse or doctor, for example. Sometimes it is good to speak about it with people who are close to you. An individual suffering of depression constantly has a feeling of guilt because of his/her state, which increases depression. At the beginning, it is better to calm down and give oneself time to recover. A depressed person often has difficulties to resolve big problems and it is even better to postpone their solution, if it is possible. Recovery from depression takes time. Generally it takes several weeks, even months.

Therapy of discussions consist to talk with the attending doctor or nurse in order to clarify and calm down the situation. To speak about problems and difficulties often helps even though there is no immediate solution to them. Later on when the situation is calm, it is possible to discuss more in details about the factors of stress and losses and think on various means of coping and alternatives of solution. Through discussions it is often possible to find new ways to see the problems of life, the ways of behaving and thinking and relations with other people. The aim is to allow the individual to recover his/her own resources.

Medical treatment often speeds up recovery from depression. Medicaments used to treat depression are safe and do not produce addiction. The effects of medical treatment on mood and symptoms appear only in 2 - 4 weeks after the beginning of medication. Even after recovery it is good to continue medical treatment, because at the end of medication symptoms easily came back. Medical treatment usually takes from six months to one year and medicine must be taken regularly every day during the period of treatment. As to interrupting medication, it is advised to discuss about it with the attending physician.

At the beginning of medication, there may be some side effects. The most usual side effects are nausea, headache, increase of sweating, stomachache and weariness. Generally side effects are light and disappear in a few days, when the organism gets used to the medicine. Sometimes it is necessary to change the medicine, if the side effects are too complicated or if the medicine does not help. As to eventual side

effects, it is good to talk about them with the attending doctor. Moreover, in addition to medicaments for depression, it may be necessary to take temporarily medicines that help sleeping or reduce anxiety.

If you need more information on depression or its treatment, you can consult your nurse or doctor.

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