



PATHWAY CLINIC

comprehensive treatment for mental health

Depression

Depression is more than a day of feeling low. It is a long-lasting, often recurring illness as real and disabling as heart disease or arthritis. Adults who experience clinical depression may feel an oppressive sadness, fatigue, and guilt. Performing on the job may be difficult; going out with friends may be unthinkable, merely getting out of bed may be impossible. The person who has depression feels increasingly isolated from families and colleagues – helpless, worthless, and lost.

Depression is a very common emotional illness. In varying degrees of severity, it affects about 6 percent of all U.S. adults, more than nine million people in any given six month period, according to the American Psychiatric Association. At least one in five Americans will experience a major depressive episode during their lifetime, with women twice as likely to develop depression as men.

Today there are extremely effective treatments for depression. Between 80 to 90 percent of those with depression can be successfully treated. Many experience relief from symptoms within three to six weeks. Treatment is generally necessary – people with depression cannot snap out of it on their own, nor will it go away.

How do you know if a person has Depression?

If a person you know has exhibited four or more of the following symptoms for more than two weeks, professional help should be considered:

- Sleeping/Eating too much or too little
- Inability to function at school or work
- Headaches, digestive disorders, nausea, pain with no medical basis
- Thoughts of death or suicide
- Difficulty in concentrating, remembering, making decisions
- Loss of interest in daily activities
- Loss of sex drive
- Persistent feelings of sadness, anxiety, hopelessness

Depression and Suicide

An estimated 15 percent of those with depression commit suicide, and depression is considered to be the underlying cause in half of all suicides. Because depression can have fatal consequences, treatment should not be delayed. Any mention of suicide – such as “I wish I were dead,” or “Everyone would be better off without me” – should be taken seriously.

Getting Help

Doctors know more about depression than perhaps any other emotional illness. Because of research and medical advances, 80 to 90 percent of those with a depressive disorder can be treated successfully.

Evaluation: A complete evaluation with a qualified professional the first step in seeking treatment. Only a licensed clinician can diagnose a person with a psychiatric disorder. During the diagnostic evaluation, the clinician will determine if any other factors are contributing to or causing the depression.

Professional Counseling: Various psychotherapies or “talk therapies” commonly used in the treatment of depression focus on the causes and effects of the illness. Interpersonal therapy helps people deal with problems in personal relationships. Cognitive therapy helps patients change negative thoughts or perceptions, such as high achiever who are convinced they are failures.

Medication: Sometimes used in combination with psychotherapy, medication can correct the biochemical imbalances that may cause depressive episodes.

If you think someone you know may be depressed definitely encourage treatment. If you would like more information or would like to make an appointment for services, please call Pathway Clinic at 608-643-3663.