DEPRESSION

What is depression?
Depression is an illness which affects the way a person feels about themself, the world around them and their future. Depression can last for weeks, months or even years.

There are different types of depression, including:

Atypical depression	*When depression is accompanied by uncommon symptoms such as increased appetite, weight, sleep, or libido[i]*
Agitated depression	*When feelings of excitement are mixed together with a depressed mood during the same episode[ii]*
Postpartum depression	*Depression which occurs within six weeks of a women giving birth, and where a number of symptoms last beyond five weeks[iii]*
Psychotic depression	*A unique subtype of depression where low mood is accompanied by delusions and/or hallucinations[iv]*
Bipolar depression	*Where a person experiences episodes of mania alternating with depression[v]*

There are a number of causes of depression and it is often triggered by a combination of factors. Depression sometimes runs in families, or a person may find that their brain struggles with mood regulation. It can also be caused by a traumatic life event, such as the death of a loved one or the diagnosis of a serious disease.[vi][vii]

Symptoms

- Ongoing depressed mood that is more than ordinary sadness
- Overall lack of interest in everyday life
- Loss of self-esteem
- Reduced energy and concentration
- Sleeping problems
- Loss of appetite and weight loss.

Depressed people often find it difficult and overwhelming to cope with everyday stress.

Clarity HEALTH CARE

DEPRESSION

What can impact depression?

Factors which can negatively impact depression are a lack of sleep[viii], a diet that is high in processed foods, high fat foods and sweets, whilst low in fruit and vegetables[ix], and alcohol consumption.[x]

Ways to manage and treat depression

The good news is that depression is treatable and effective treatments are available, so the earlier a person seeks help, the better. Along with professional support, factors such as increasing physical activity, prioritising sleep, and other lifestyle changes can alleviate symptoms of depression.[xi]

Even when treatment is successful, it is still important that a person stays in close touch with their health professionals, because maintenance treatment is often required to prevent depression from returning.[iii]

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