

Facts on Aging & Depression

Common Symptoms of Late-Life Depression

- Persistent sadness (lasting two weeks or more) and frequent tearfulness.
- Feeling worthless, helpless, or slowed down.
- Excessive worries about finances and health problems.
- Difficulty sleeping. Weight changes. Loss of energy.
- Difficulty concentrating. Pacing and fidgeting.
- Diminished interest or pleasure in all/most activities.
- Physical symptoms such as pain or gastrointestinal problems.

Treatment of Depression

- Supportive and behavioral talk therapies. Exercise regimen approved by physician.
- Various antidepressant medications may be prescribed by your physician.
- Combination of talk therapy and antidepressant medication.
- Electroconvulsive Therapy (ECT) is a fast-acting and effective treatment for severe depression. Also for those who don't respond to or can't tolerate antidepressants. Little or no interaction with other medications.

Associations with Late-Life Depression

- Cancer
- Parkinson's Disease
- Heart Disease
- Stroke
- Alzheimer's Disease
- Life Changes (retirement, moving, etc.)
- Multiple losses.

Depression can happen to anyone. As the brain and body age, many bio-chemical changes begin to take place. Changes as the result of aging, medical illnesses or genetics may put the older adult at a greater risk for developing depression. Untreated depression increases the risk of suicide.

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