

AS@W...FACTS ABOUT DEPRESSION

What is depression?

- Depression is a common disorder that results in an individual experiencing low mood and having little interest in life over a period of time.
- Depression can be classified as mild, moderate or major.
 - Each of these categories includes the experience of the same kinds of symptoms or feelings.
 - Major depression is more severe than mild or moderate depression in terms of the number of symptoms experienced, the duration of the symptoms, and the intensity of the symptoms.

What are the symptoms of depression?

- Symptoms of depression include:
 - Feeling worthless, helpless, or hopeless
 - Loss of interest or pleasure (including hobbies or sexual desire)
 - Change in appetite
 - Sleep disturbances
 - Decreased energy or fatigue (without a lot of physical exertion)
 - Sense of worthlessness or guilt
 - Poor concentration or difficulty making decisions
- Many people experience some of the above symptoms some of the time. However, if an individual has enough of these signs or symptoms that last for two weeks or more, they may be suffering from clinical depression.



AS@W Antidepressant Skills at Work Dealing with Mood Problems in the Workplace

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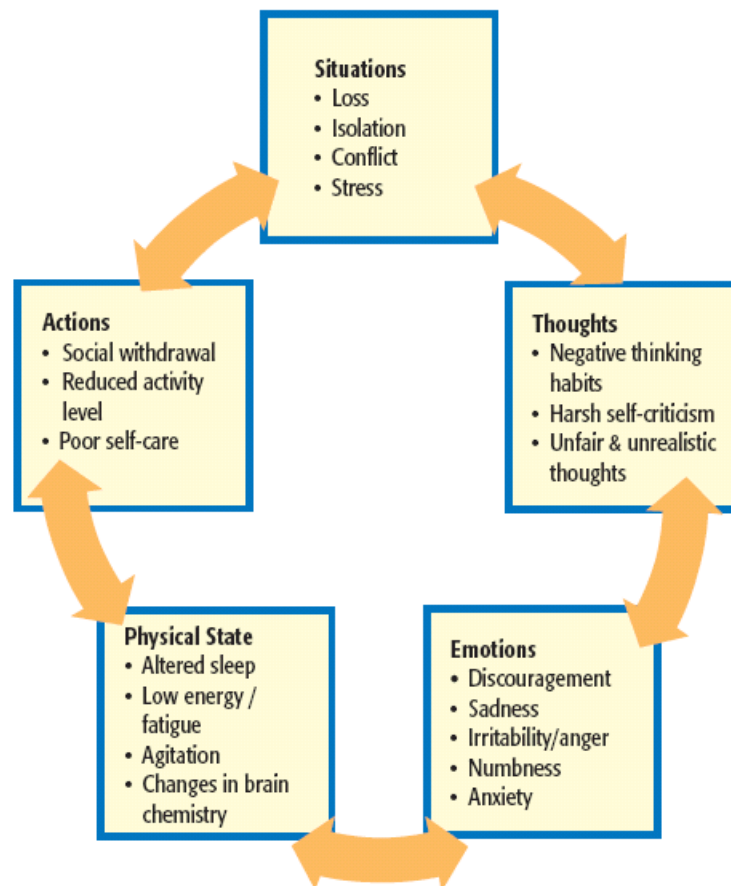


What is the prevalence of depression in Canada?

- ❑ In any given year, 5% of Canadians will experience clinical depression. Women (6-7%) are more likely to be diagnosed with depression than men (3-4%). A further 10% will experience some depressive symptoms (low mood) every year.
- ❑ Up to 1 out of 6 Canadian adults will experience depression at some point in their lifetime.
- ❑ Depression is one of the most prevalent mental health conditions in Canada.
- ❑ The World Health Organization (WHO) has estimated that by the year 2020, depression will be responsible for the 2nd highest rate of disability, following cardiac disease.

What causes depression?

Depression is the result of complex interactions between **life situations**, **thoughts**, **emotions**, **physiology**, and **actions**. Each of these areas of one's life can play a role in the development of depression, and depression itself can have an impact on all of them.



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Who is affected by depression?

- Depression affects people of all ages, education levels, socio-economic conditions, cultures, and in all occupations.
- The onset of depression usually occurs in adolescence. However, depression is often diagnosed later in life - the average age of diagnosis is between the early 20s and the early 30s.
- It has been shown that women suffer from depression at higher rates than men – on average, women suffer from depression at double the rate that men do.
- There is a strong inverse association between depression and socioeconomic status. Research has shown that even though there are differences in definitions and measurements of socioeconomic status, the likelihood of developing depression in the lowest socioeconomic group is twice as likely as in the highest socioeconomic group.

What is the cost of depression?

- Depression affects an individual's experience in the workplace as it contributes to poor productivity, conflict and absenteeism.
- Depression also has a detrimental economic effect on an individual's financial situation due to costs associated with medical or mental health appointments, hospitalizations, and medication (if prescribed).
- It has been shown that 62-76% of short-term disability episodes in Canada were attributed to depression.
- In Canada it has been estimated that the cost of depression is upwards of \$25 billion.

What are effective treatments for depression?

- Effective treatment for depression exists in the form of psychotherapy, such as cognitive-behavioural therapy or interpersonal therapy, and antidepressant medications either alone or in combination with psychotherapy.
- A 2002 survey reported that almost 1 in 2 respondents that reported symptoms that met the criteria for a mood disorder in the previous 12 months had not consulted with a professional. Of all professionals that were consulted, family physicians constituted the overwhelming majority.



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What is the association between depression and other chronic diseases?

- ❑ Individuals with depression are more likely to develop chronic diseases. In addition, individuals who have a chronic disease and depression are more likely to have a poorer prognosis than individuals who only have a chronic disease.

- ❑ Strong associations between the following medical conditions and an increased prevalence of major depression have been demonstrated:
 - Stroke and heart disease
 - Diabetes
 - Obesity
 - Parkinson's disease
 - Epilepsy
 - Arthritis
 - Cancer
 - AIDS
 - Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)
 - Dementia
 - Alzheimer's disease

References

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ABOUT AS@W

How was *Antidepressant Skills at Work* developed?

The guide was developed by British Columbia Mental Health and Addiction Services (BCMHAS), an agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority. The guide and accompanying materials have been authored by **Dr. Dan Bilsker**, **Dr. Merv Gilbert**, and **Dr. Joti Samra** – registered psychologists and scientist-practitioners with expertise in issues relating to workplace mental health. These psychologists are with the Centre for Applied Research in Mental Health and Addiction (CARMHA), Faculty of Health Sciences, Simon Fraser University. The guide was written on the basis of a review of the scientific literature; consultation with employers, unions, mental health providers and employee groups; and adaptation of existing self-care depression programs.

How can the manual be accessed?

The manual is available for viewing and free download at www.carmha.ca/antidepressant-skills/work/ or from www.bcmhas.ca/research. Individuals or organizations are free to print and make multiple copies of the guide, with permission from CARMHA (publications@carmha.ca). Print copies and audio CDs are available at a low cost from our ordering page at www.carmha.ca/ordering.

For further information about AS@W and associated resources and materials, please visit www.carmha.ca/selfcare. This information will be updated on a regular basis.



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