

Are Ya' Feeling Down?

If You're Losing Interest in Hobbies or Sex, You could be Suffering from Depression

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Depression: we've all heard of it and we've all experienced it. But do we really know exactly what depression is? Of course it's that sad, ho-hum kind of feeling you get maybe on a gloomy day or when you're just feeling a bit overwhelmed with life. But did you know that mental illness is on the rise among college students?

The causes of depression are complex and in most cases it is genetic. This means that someone with depression cannot just pull it together and move on. Severe depression requires professional treatment whether it is counseling, medication, or both. WebMd is a useful source for finding information on any type of illness, disease or disorder. The first step in treating depression symptoms is to recognize them. According to the website, these are the symptoms a person with depression would experience:

-Persistent feelings of sadness, empti-

ness, hopelessness, helplessness, worthlessness, or pessimism

- Anxiety
- Guilt
- Loss of interest in activities or hobbies that used to give you pleasure
- Loss of energy, fatigue, or feeling "slowed down"
- Loss of interest in sex
- Loss of interest in socializing with other people
- Difficulty concentrating, thinking, remembering, or making decisions
- Changes in sleep patterns, both inability to sleep and oversleeping
- Changes in eating patterns, both over- and under eating
- Thoughts of suicide or attempted suicide
- Restlessness or irritability
- Persistent but vague physical problems that do not respond to treatment, such as head or stomach pain

Another severe mood disorder is

bipolar disease, which causes extreme mood swings between depression (the low) and mania (the high). This is where the term manic-depressive comes from. This disorder is much more extreme because the manic part brings on excessive happiness or energy, infla-

disappear for a while so that the person is in a normal state of mind but then can reappear without any specific trigger. Bipolar disorder is also a disorder that is genetic and a person's risk is heightened if the disorder exists in family history.

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tion of self-esteem and unrealistic feelings of importance. The many other symptoms include racing thoughts, excessive talkativeness, and involvement with irresponsible activities that could lead to dangerous consequences. The depression part is a very low feeling where the person cannot pull themselves out of bed. These moods can

No one should feel embarrassed for experiencing depression. It is important to seek treatment because these disorders could greatly affect your daily life, including school, work, and relationships. In order for treatment to be successful, it is important that you establish a long-term relationship with your healthcare provider so that your doctor can recognize changes in moods and reactions to medications. If you feel that you experience more than one of the symptoms of depression or bipolar disorder, you can seek help through your primary care physician or here on campus. The counseling services on campus are in the Student Assistance Center in W-117 of the Olmsted Building. The phone number is 948-6025.

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