

Depression is Not a Normal Part of Growing Older

Depression is a true and treatable medical condition, not a normal part of aging. However older adults are at an increased risk for experiencing depression. Depression is not just having "the blues" or the emotions we feel when grieving the loss of a loved one. It is a true medical condition that is treatable, like diabetes or hypertension.

How Do I Know If It's Depression?

Someone who is depressed has feelings of sadness or anxiety that last for weeks at a time. He or she may also experience—



- Feelings of hopelessness and/or pessimism
- Loss of interest in activities once pleasurable
- Fatigue and decreased energy
- Overeating or appetite loss
- Feelings of guilt or helplessness
- Irritability, restlessness
- Insomnia or excessive sleeping
- Thoughts of suicide or attempts

<http://www.cdc.gov/aging/mentalhealth/depression.htm>

Tips to Combat and Prevent Depression in Older Adults

Get Enough Sleep. When you don't get enough sleep, your depression symptoms can be worse. Aim for somewhere between 7 to 9 hours of sleep each night.

Volunteer Your Time. Helping others is one of the best ways to feel better about yourself and expand your social network.

Take Care of a Pet. A pet can keep you company, and walking a dog, for example, can be good exercise for you and a great way to meet people.

Learn a New Skill. Pick something that you've always wanted to learn, or that sparks your imagination and creativity.

Create Opportunities to Laugh. Laughter provides a mood boost, so swap humorous stories and jokes with your loved ones, watch a comedy, or read a funny book.

Maintain a Healthy diet. Avoid eating too much sugar and junk food. Choose healthy foods that provide nourishment and energy, and take a daily multivitamin.

Talk with Your Health Care Provider. Discuss possible treatments options with your doctor.

<http://www.theyucatantimes.com/2015/05/depression-in-older-adults-and-the-elderly-one-of-the-biggest-issues-of-todays-health/>