

News Release

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What Does Depression Look Like?

Tampa, Florida (August, 2010). Have you or someone you know expressed feeling sad and helpless? If so, it is possible you have a type of depression referred to as clinical depression. Those with clinical depression experience a deep and constant sense of hopelessness and despair. The symptoms of clinical depression make it difficult to work, study, sleep, eat, and enjoy friends and activities. While most people feel sad or low at some point in their life, clinical depression is different and it is important to not confuse clinical depression with the normal sadness we all experience from time to time.

What are some symptoms of clinical depression:

- **Feelings of worthlessness or guilt almost every day**
- **Fatigue or loss of energy almost every day**
- **Difficulty concentrating or making decisions**
- **Insomnia or excessive sleeping almost every day**
- **Significantly diminished interest or pleasure in almost all activities nearly every day**
- **Significant feelings of agitation or of being slowed down**
- **Recurring thoughts of death or suicide (not just fearing death)**
- **Significant weight loss or gain (a change of more than 5% of body weight in a month)**

To distinguish your condition as major depression, you need to have five of the above. One of the five symptoms must be either depressed mood or loss of interest. Also, the symptoms must be present for most of the day every day or nearly every day for at least two weeks.

About twice as many women as men have major depression. Depression in men is significantly underreported. Men who suffer from clinical depression are less likely to seek help or even talk about their experience. Some factors that increase the risk of clinical depression are increased responsibilities at home or at work, balancing work and other commitments, childcare issues or caring for an aged parent, grief from losing a loved one as a result of death, separation or divorce, feeling socially isolated, and being physically, sexually or emotionally abused.

Remember that the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a benefit available to all employees and dependents of companies contracted with Wood & Associates for providing confidential free professional assistance 24-hours a day, 7 days a week. Remember that you or a dependent may contact your EAP regarding any concern that you might have – you don't have to wait until a problem becomes big to seek help. Above all, keep in mind that concerns develop over time but the way you address them can be changed. If you need help in developing a specific plan to address whatever might be contributing to a change in your mood or are concerned about another, all you need to do is call your EAP and you will be directed to our experienced team of counselors. It is that simple. We will help you cope, find assistance, and guide you down the path to effectively dealing with whatever might be impacting your life.