

Depression

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Preventive Medicine

Depression is a symptom of something that is wrong. The cause of depression should be sought, and most of the time can be found and eliminated. Some depression is caused by certain situations. If this is the case, it is possible to confront the depressing situation and cause a change that will make the unpleasant problem easier to live with. Most deep depressions have a physical or biochemical cause. Physical causes include various forms of organic ill-health and biochemical causes include improper lifestyles leading to improper blood chemistries.

Too much leisure frequently causes depression. Jealousy, being unappreciated, a lack of genuine religion, too much work, anticipating future problems, and stimulating amusements all contribute to depression. One should so control his thoughts that depressions do not get a grip on the mind. It is possible for depression to snowball.

Recently, a fine article appeared in a medical journal naming caffeine as a cause of depression. It was estimated that a sizable percentage of individuals who are currently being treated in mental institutions could be released in a state of perfect mental health if only caffeine were eliminated entirely from the dietary. Caffeine is found in coffee, tea, colas, and chocolate.

Some other suggestions to avoid or treat depression include the use of a diet that does not irritate or stimulate the nervous system. All concentrated foods, particularly animal products, all sweets, and all fatty foods put such a burden on the body to get them digested and disposed of that the net effect on the nervous system is a depressing one. Overeating or undereating can cause depression. There should be strict regularity for the time of meals, using no food or drinks between meals, since the likelihood of developing chemical by-products of poor digestion can result from an irregular mealtime and between-meals snacking. For the person who is depressed, one should eliminate all evening food, the last meal of the day being taken around four in the afternoon. Two meals daily are better than three, the largest meal of the day being breakfast, as the body is better able to digest food early in the morning than at any other time.

While depression lasts, one should eliminate sugar and all concentrated foods, even dried fruits or various sweet fruits and vegetables such as sweet potatoes, mangoes, watermelons, and bananas. One should eat freely of foods that are high in B vitamins such as greens, legumes, and whole grains.

A good treatment for depression is skin stimulation with a stiff brush. This is done by simply stroking the skin slowly and evenly beginning at the fingertips and progressing toward the heart, covering every inch of skin. Following the brushing of the skin, a cool or tepid shower can be taken with special attention to getting a cold spray between the shoulder blades which will stimulate the circulation to the adrenals.

Not only should mealtime be on a regular schedule, but so should bedtime, arising time, elimination, study periods, and all other things. Daily sunbaths, weather permitting, can assist with relieving depression. A deep breathing exercise, breathing in for the full extent of one's capacity and holding it for a few seconds, breathing out fully, and repeating the procedure several times can be quite cheering. Brisk walks with head up, correct breathing and good posture can lift the gloom from the spirits. Purposeful labor out-of-doors, such as gardening, or yard work can be very helpful. Talking should be carefully controlled, not too much, not too little, and only about cheerful subjects. One should not talk about one's self or any single subject upon which the mind may brood. Self-pity is nearly universal with depressed people, and should never be indulged in or encouraged. Never give into a gloomy thought, as gloomy thoughts can multiply and become such a weight that one cannot shake them off. Of course, the most important item is that of Bible study and prayer. One can learn to control the thoughts and allow the mind to dwell on heavenly themes.

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