

Mental Health Awareness



Bell Let's Talk is a charitable program dedicated to mental health. They have committed over \$62 million to support a wide range of mental health organizations from coast to coast.

- Talking is the first step towards meaningful change and to build awareness, acceptance and action.
- Spokespersons. Clara Hughes [Olympian], Stefie Shock [musician], Michel Mpambara [comedian] and Seamus O'Regan [former Canada AM Co-Host].
- Starting on Match 14th Clara will be riding 12,00kms over 110 days and stopping in 95 communities.
- Community Fund - Through the Bell Let's Talk Community Fund, Bell provides grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$50,000 to organizations, hospitals, and agencies focused on improving access to mental health care and who are making a positive impact in their communities.
- Where to go for help
- Youth – Kids Help Phone ; 1-800-668-6888; <http://kidshelpphone.ca>
- Adults – Canadian Mental Health Association; <http://cmha.ca>

What is Depression?

When you have depression, it **interferes with daily life** and **causes pain for both you and those who care about you.**

Depression is a common but serious illness.

Signs & Symptoms

Depression is defined by at least **five** of the following occurring simultaneously for at least **two weeks** in adults:

- Depressed mood during most of the day, particularly morning
- Fatigue, loss of energy
- Feelings worthlessness or guilty
- Impaired concentration, indecisiveness
- Insomnia, hypersomnia (excessive sleeping)
- Markedly diminished interest or pleasure in almost all activities almost everyday

- Recurring thoughts of death or suicide
- Restlessness
- Significant weight loss or gain

Causes of Depression

Research indicates that depressive illnesses are disorders of the brain.

There is often a **combination** of the causes of depression:

Abuse. Past physical, sexual, or emotional.

Medications. Ex. Some drugs for high blood pressure (beta-blockers or reserpine).

Conflict. Personal conflicts or disputes with family members or friends.

Death or loss. Sadness or grief from a death can increase the risk of depression.

Genetics. Family history of depression may increase risk.

Major events. Includes good events (new job, graduating, getting married) or moving, losing a job, divorce, and retirement.

Serious illnesses. Depression may coexist with a major illness or a reaction to the illness.

Substance abuse. Nearly 30% people with substance abuse problems also have major or clinical depression.

How Can I Help?

What if it is a loved one who is depressed?

- Make an appointment or go with him/her if they already have one.
- Offer emotional support, understanding, and encouragement.
- Listen carefully.
- Never dismiss feelings, but point out realities and offer hope.
- Never ignore comments about suicide, and report them to his/her therapist or doctor.
- Invite them on walks, outings, and other activities. Keep trying if they decline, but don't push them too much too soon.
- Remind them that with time and treatment, the depression will lift.

What if it is myself who is depressed?

- Do not wait too long to get evaluated or treated. Research indicates that the longer one waits, the greater the impairment can be down the road.
- Be active and exercise. Do an activity you once enjoyed.
- Set realistic goals for yourself.
- Break up large tasks into small ones, set some realistic priorities.
- Spend time with other people and confide in a trusted friend or relative.
- Expect your mood to improve gradually, not immediately. Often, sleep and appetite will begin to improve before your depressed mood lifts.
- Postpone important decisions (marriage, divorce, changing jobs) until you feel better. Discuss decisions with others.

*Contact your wellness consultant for further direction on assistance that may be available to you.
Contact us at info@ewsnetwork.com*