

June 4, 2008

DEPRESSION IN THE WORKPLACE

“Normal” Stress Responses

Feeling sad or down is a normal part of life. Everyone gets the blues from time to time.

Often, feeling down is a result of stress. However, mild to moderate stress can be an effective means of helping you focus your attention, energy, and motivation.

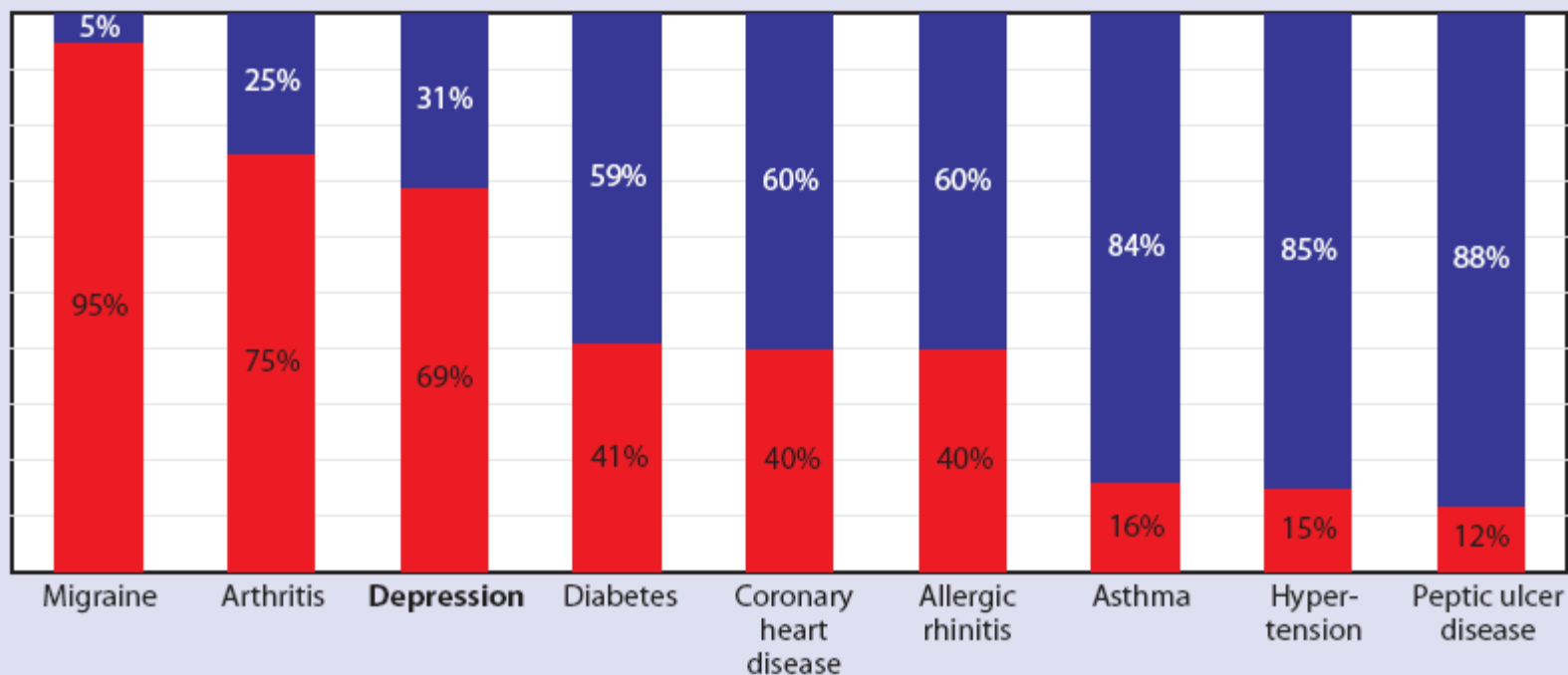
Persistent or complicated stress, grief, or depression needs to be dealt with constructively.

Actual Cost of Depression Is Not Obvious

How different illnesses compare in ratio of direct to indirect costs

Lost productivity, rather than treatment costs, is a main concern.

■ Indirect costs* ■ Direct cost**



Know the Facts


- Depression ranks among the top three workplace problems for employee assistance professionals, following only family crisis and stress.
- 3% of total short term disability days are due to depressive disorders and in 76% of those cases, the employee was female.
- Depressive disorders account for more than half of all medical plan dollars paid for mental health problems. The amount for treatment of these claims was close to the amount spent on treatment for heart disease.
- The annual economic cost of depression in 1995 was \$600 per depressed worker. Nearly one-third of these costs are for treatment and 72% are costs related to absenteeism and lost productivity at work.
- Almost 15% of those suffering from severe depression will commit suicide.

Observing the Depressed Employee

- Decreased or inconsistent productivity
- Absenteeism, tardiness, frequent absence from work station
- Increased errors, diminished work quality
- Procrastination, missed deadlines
- Withdrawal from co-workers
- Overly sensitive and/or emotional reactions
- Decreased interest in work
- Slowed thoughts
- Difficulty learning and remembering
- Slow movement and actions
- Frequent comments about being tired all the time



Seeking Help at Work

- Often times a depressed employee will not seek treatment because they fear the affect it will have on their job and they are concerned about confidentiality.
 - Many employees are also unaware they have depression or they fear their insurance is inadequate to cover costs.
 - Most employers will refer a depressed employee for help if they are aware of the symptoms. 64% of NMHA Survey respondents said they would refer an employee to an EAP health professional.
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Why Talk About Depression?


- In 2004, 8.0 percent of adults aged 18 or older (an estimated 17.1 million adults) reported having experienced at least one major depressive episode during the past year.
- Among adults aged 18 or older who experienced at least one major depressive episode during the past year, 65% reported having received treatment for their depression.
- The rate of past month illicit drug use was nearly twice as high among adults who had experienced major depression (14.2 percent) compared with adults who had not experienced depression (7.3 percent).

Some Facts About Depression

- Depression is a disorder that affects your thoughts, moods, feelings, behavior and physical health.
- People used to think it was "all in your head" and that if you really tried, you could pull yourself out of it.
- Doctors now know that depression is not a weakness, and you can't treat it on your own. It's a medical disorder with a biological or chemical basis.



More About Depression

- Depression may occur only once in a person's life. Often, however, it occurs as repeated episodes over a lifetime, with periods free of depression in between. Or it may be a chronic condition, requiring ongoing treatment over a lifetime.
 - Medications are available that are generally safe and effective, even for the most severe depression. With proper treatment, most people with serious depression improve, often within weeks, and can return to normal daily activities.
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Types of Depressive Disorders

- Major depression – serious intense episode of depression which may last weeks or months.
- Dysthymic Disorder – low grade, chronic depression which may last for years.
- Bipolar Disorder – manic depression – highs & lows.
- Substance Abuse related depression – depression that results from abuse of alcohol or other drugs.
- Season Affective Disorder (SAD) – depression that happens only during certain times of year, usually winter.

Signs and Symptoms

of Depression

1. Sad mood
2. Loss of interest in pleasurable things, lack of motivation
3. Weight gain or loss
4. Sleep problems
5. Sense of tiredness, exhaustion
6. Irritability
7. Confusion, loss of concentration, poor memory
8. Negative thinking
9. Withdrawal from friends and family
10. Suicidal thoughts or attempts

Emotional Symptoms of Depression

- Restlessness, irritability, or feeling on edge or keyed up.
- Excessive worrying.
- Fearing that something bad is going to happen; sense of impending doom.
- Inability to concentrate; “blanking out.”
- Constant feelings of sadness.
- Feeling suicidal.

Suicide: What do we know?

- Suicide is now the 8th leading cause of death in Americans.
- The third leading cause of death among 15 to 24 year olds.
- Every 17 minutes another life is lost to suicide.
- Every day, 86 Americans take their own life and over 1,500 attempt suicide.
- Suicide takes the lives of more than 30,000 Americans every year.

Who is at Risk for Suicide?

- Substance Abuse: 6-14 time increased risk
- Major Depression Diagnosis (mood disorder): 20 times greater
- Schizophrenia: 10 times greater
- Anxiety Disorder: 3 times greater
- Painful Illness

Assess Yourself...

...how are you feeling?

	Not at all	Several days	More than half the days	Nearly every day
1. Little interest or pleasure in doing things	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Feeling down, depressed or hopeless	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Trouble falling or staying asleep or sleeping too much	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Feeling tired or having little energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Poor appetite or overeating	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Feeling bad about yourself	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Trouble concentrating	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Being irritable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Feeling slowed down, moving or talking slowly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Thoughts of hurting yourself or wanting to be dead	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Common Treatments

- Talk therapy
- Family support
- Support groups
- Faith experiences
- Exercise and alternative therapies
- Medications
 - Antidepressants
 - Nutritional Supplements



Seek Help If You...

- Are thinking about suicide.
- Are experiencing severe mood swings.
- Think your depression is related to other problems that require professional help.
- Think you would feel better if you talked with someone.
- Don't feel in control enough to handle things yourself.

Types of Anxiety Disorders

- Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD)
- Panic Disorder and Panic Attacks
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
- Phobias
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Other Types

Physical Symptoms of Anxiety

- Trembling, twitching, or shaking.
- Feeling of fullness in the throat or chest.
- Breathlessness or rapid heartbeat.
- Lightheadedness or dizziness.
- Sweating or cold, clammy hands.
- Excessive startle reflex.
- Muscle tension, headaches, or soreness.
- Fatigue.
- Sleep problems, such as the inability to fall asleep or stay asleep, early waking, or restless, unsatisfying sleep.

Emotional Symptoms of Anxiety

- Restlessness, irritability, or feeling on edge or keyed up.
- Excessive worrying.
- Fearing that something bad is going to happen; sense of impending doom.
- Inability to concentrate; “blanking out.”
- Constant feelings of sadness.
- Feeling suicidal.

Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD)

Generalized anxiety disorder is excessive anxiety and worry about everyday events or activities. Anxiety in those with GAD is difficult to control and causes notable complications in daily work and social settings.

Physical symptoms of the disorder include edginess, fatigue, difficulty concentrating, irritability, muscle tension, and sleep disturbances. To be diagnosed with GAD, one must experience this excessive anxiety for the majority of days during a period of six months or longer.


Most of those with GAD claim to have felt anxious for their entire lives, and the disorder is often first seen in childhood or adolescence.

Panic Disorder/Panic Attacks

A **panic attack** is a sudden bout of intense fear or anxiety that causes frightening but not life-threatening symptoms such as a pounding heart, shortness of breath, and the feeling of losing control or dying. Usually from 5 to 20 minutes long, a panic attack may be triggered by stressful circumstances or it may occur unexpectedly.



Panic Disorder/Panic Attacks



Panic disorder is diagnosed when you have repeated panic attacks, you worry about having another attack, and you avoid places that you think may cause one. It is possible to have panic attacks without developing panic disorder, and panic attacks may occur with other anxiety disorders.

Phobias

Phobias are defined as exaggerated, involuntary, and irrational fears of particular situations or things. Phobias are generally divided into three separate types:

Specific phobia (heights, spiders, etc.)

Social phobia (social anxiety disorder)

Agoraphobia (fear of being trapped, crowds etc.)

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder


Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) is a potentially disabling anxiety disorder. A person who has OCD has intrusive and unwanted thoughts and repeatedly performs tasks to get rid of the thoughts.

For example, if you have OCD, you may fear that everything you touch is contaminated with germs, and in order to ease that fear, you repeatedly wash your hands.

The effects of OCD range from mild to severe. OCD can disrupt your social life and relationships as well as your ability to work or go to school.



Other Types of Anxiety



Some people experience anxiety in response to a general medical condition or from substance abuse. Others exhibit certain signs of particular anxiety disorders without meeting all the criteria for an official diagnosis.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

Post-traumatic stress disorder is often caused by personally experiencing or witnessing a violent or tragic event that resulted in feelings of intense fear, helplessness, or horror.

Events that often lead to the development of PTSD include rape, war, natural disasters, abuse, and serious accidents. People with PTSD continually re-experience the traumatic event through nightmares, hallucinations, or flashbacks; they often avoid all things associated with the event and exhibit increased arousal (e.g., difficulty sleeping, irritability, difficulty concentrating, extreme alertness, jumpiness).

Causes of Anxiety Disorders

- Brain chemistry
- Trauma
- Undiagnosed physical illness
- Untreated mood disorders, depression
- Chronic stress
- Family history

When Anxiety Becomes Serious

If anxiety is severe, you may have feelings of helplessness, confusion, and extreme worry that are out of proportion with the actual seriousness or likelihood of the feared event.

Anxiety that becomes overwhelming and interferes with daily life is not normal. This type of anxiety may be a symptom of another problem, such as depression.

Anxiety Rating Scale

- 0 Relaxation - Calm, a feeling of being undistracted and at peace
- 1 Slight Anxiety - Passing twinge of anxiety; feeling slightly nervous
- 2 Mild Anxiety - Butterflies in stomach, muscle tension, definitely nervous.
- 3 Moderate Anxiety - Feeling uncomfortable but still in control; heart starting to beat faster, breathing becomes more rapid, sweaty palms

Anxiety Rating Scale

- 4 Marked Anxiety – Feeling uncomfortable, beginning to wonder about maintaining control
- 5 Early Panic – Heart pounding or beating irregularly, dizziness, compulsion to escape
- 6 Moderate Panic Attack – Palpitations, feeling disoriented or detached, perceived loss of control
- 7 – 10 Major Panic Attack – All symptoms of previous stages exaggerated, terror, fear of insanity or death



Seven Ways to Help

1. Confront the situation quickly.
 2. Be empathic.
 3. Listen to their story.
 4. Provide a solution to the employee.
 5. Offer practical assistance within the workplace.
 6. Follow up.
 7. Create a culture of support.
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