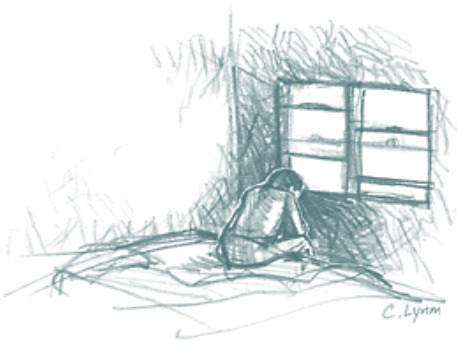


Adolescent Depression

By: Brandie J. Carwile

Reviewed By: Amy M. Brausch, M.A.,

Department of Psychology, Northern Illinois University



➤ *What is adolescent depression?*

-Adolescent Depression can be defined as a diagnosis of an individual who experiences depressive characteristics for a 2-week or longer period.



➤ *What are some symptoms of adolescent depression?*

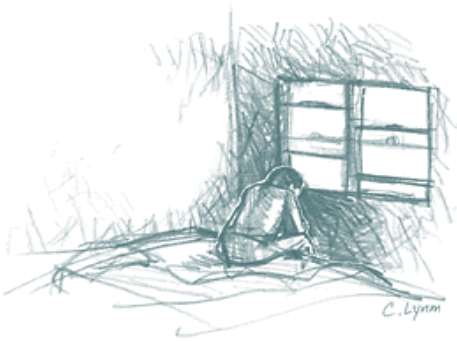
-Symptoms are often difficult to diagnose especially during adolescence. The period of adolescence is marked by significant changes in emotional, social and intellectual changes. However, if an individual experiences certain symptoms for a 2 week period or longer, depression may be a possible diagnosis.

Symptoms associated with adolescent depression include:

- Poor Performance in School
- Withdrawal from Family and Friends
- Feelings of Hopelessness and Sadness
- Lack of Enthusiasm, Energy or Motivation
- Anger and Rage
- Changes in Eating and/or Sleeping Patterns
- Substance Abuse
- Suicidal Thoughts or Actions



******It is important to remember many adolescents may display symptoms associated with depression because of the normal social, emotional, and intellectual changes adolescents normally go through. The difference between normal behavioral symptoms and actual depression is the duration of time symptoms are experienced******



➤ ***How Prevalent is Adolescent Depression?***

-Adolescent depression is a widespread issue so you are not alone if you experience any symptoms possibly related to depression.

Here are some statistics on adolescent depression:

- 1 out of 8 adolescents are diagnosed with depression
- Many adolescents, both male and female, are misdiagnosed or under diagnosed.
- Depression is twice as likely to affect females than males
- In the United States, roughly 5,000 adolescents who experience depression commit suicide each year.



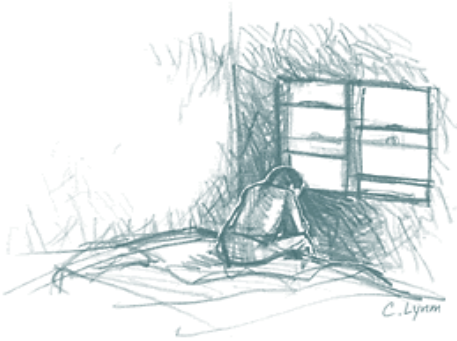
➤ ***How does depression affect adolescents' lives?***

-Adolescents may be affected in a number of ways. Their behavior, mood, social skills, and performance in school are some of the most common aspects of adolescent life affected.



➤ ***How can you recognize adolescent depression?***

-Adolescent depression is a very serious issue. Adolescents who suffer from depression will often display symptoms as well as participate in much more risk-taking activities. Heavy drug use, drinking, and sexual promiscuity are among some of the common risk taking behaviors in which depressed adolescents participate.



➤ ***What can be done for adolescents suffering from depression?***

-If the symptoms and risk taking behaviors are noticeable, the issue needs to be addressed. Professional help is available and should be sought immediately.

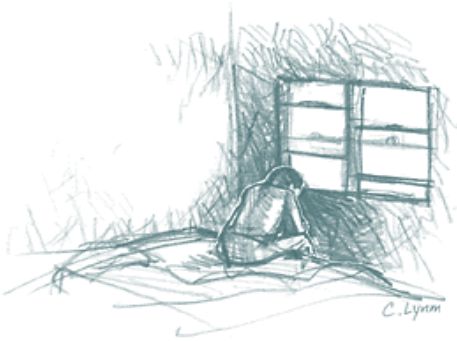
-There are several forms of treatment available for those suffering from depression, which can be determined by a professional.

Some General Treatment Options Include:

1. ***Psychotherapy***: Provides opportunity to explore events and feelings that are painful or troubling. Psychotherapy also teaches coping skills.
2. ***Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy***: Helps change negative patterns of thinking and behaving.
3. ***Interpersonal Therapy***: Focuses on how to develop healthier relationships at home and at school.
4. ***Medication***: Relieves some symptoms of depression and is often prescribed along with therapy.

******Once treatment is sought the road to recovery has begun. The important step is in recognizing depression and seeking the necessary professional help. If you experience symptoms of depression you should speak with somebody as soon as possible. A good first step would be contacting your health care provider for information and advice. Talking about your feelings with a teacher, school counselor, or parent is also a good first step to helping with depression******





For more information on treatment options please visit: www.nmha.org

- Adolescent depression is a very serious issue among adolescents. If gone untreated, depression can alter the life of an adolescent and in some cases lead to suicide. Professional help is essential in dealing with this issue.

THERE IS HOPE!

It is important to remember adolescent depression is an occurrence many deal with on a daily basis. Treatment and professional help is available and depression is something that can be overcome. Talking about your feelings and expressing your doubts and concerns along with seeking professional help will help in overcoming depression!

For further information on the issue of adolescent depression please visit:

- www.nmha.org
- www.nlm.nih.gov
- www.dbsalliance.org
 - www.apa.org
- www.suicidology.org