



Teenage Depression

Depression is a mental illness that requires help from an experienced professional. Although many mistakenly believe that depression is an adult illness, many young people also suffer from depression. Teenage depression often goes undiagnosed because adults in the teen's life mistake the symptoms of depression for typical teenage moodiness.

However, untreated teenage depression can have dire consequences. Depressed teenagers are more likely than their peers to have trouble at school, experiment with drugs and alcohol, or commit suicide. In fact, according to the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, suicide is the third-leading cause of death among young adults age 15 to 24. Teenage boys are most likely to successfully attempt suicide, while the group most at risk for depressive disorders is teen girls.

Depression often causes victims to feel so despondent that they do not seek help on their own, so parents, teachers, school counselors and coaches must be able to recognize the symptoms and know something about teen suicide facts and signs. Without treatment, depression in teens can last for weeks, months or years.

Symptoms of Depression in Teenagers

It can be difficult to separate normal teenage angst from depression. To further complicate matters, teenagers experience symptoms of depression differently than adults do. While a depressed adult might struggle with overwhelming sadness and lethargy, teenage depression tends to mainly manifest itself in aggression, irritability and social withdrawal. Other symptoms of teenage depression include:

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- Changes in eating and sleeping habits
- Difficulty concentrating
- Fatigue or lack of energy
- Feelings of worthlessness or guilt
- Frequent crying
- Lack of motivation
- Neglect of personal appearance
- Loss of Interest in once-enjoyed activities
- Restlessness
- Thoughts of death or suicide