



# Depression, It's Not a Regular Part of Aging

Older adults are often at a higher risk to experience symptoms of depression. As people age, there will often be many major life changes all at around the same time. It's okay to feel overwhelmed, or have difficulty with some of the changes. Depression doesn't have to be a part of it.

## What is Depression?

Depression differs from regular feelings of sadness in that it takes over a person's life. It isn't a feeling that goes away and it disrupts day-to-day living. The feelings of hopelessness are unrelenting. Everyday tasks like working, eating, sleeping, etc, suddenly seem impossible and there is no sign of relief.

## Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD):

Also known as "the winter blues". SAD is a form of depression that is generally triggered by the limited amount of daylight in the fall and winter months. SAD affects one to two percent of the population. Many people find "SAD lamps" to be helpful with symptoms.

## Who Becomes Depressed?

About 1 in 10 Canadians will experience some form of depression in their lifetime.

Women are more likely to experience depression than men.

***Everyone experiences depression differently. Not every symptom is always present.***



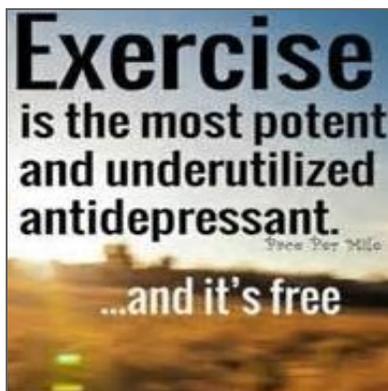
## Signs & symptoms of depression:

- Sadness/hopelessness
- Irritability/restlessness
- Loss of interest
- Trouble concentrating
- Indecisiveness
- Thoughts of suicide
- Fatigue
- Disruptions in sleep patterns
- Changes in weight/appetite
- Unexplained aches and pains
- Impaired ability to function during regular activities



## Why do older adults become depressed?

- Loss of a spouse
- Loss of a friends
- Loss of a job
- Major life changes (ex: Children moving away)
- Diagnosis of a chronic condition
- Stress
- Genetics
- Brain chemistry



For more information and resources for older adults, contact **Forever...in motion** at **(306)844-4080**

## Exercise can help combat symptoms of depression!

Regular involvement in physical activity provides both short and long term psychological benefits. One hundred and fifty minutes of physical activity a week is the recommendation—but anything is better than nothing and the more you do, the more benefits you will experience.

## What are the benefits of physical activity?

- When we are physically active, our bodies release endorphins which help to reduce symptoms of depression, anxiety and stress
- Provides feelings of relaxation, enjoyment and pleasure
- Controls weight
- Reduces the risk of cardiovascular diseases
- Increases self-esteem
- Strengthens muscles and bones
- Improves mental health and mood
- Improves abilities to do day-to-day activities
- Decreases risk of falling
- Reduces the risk of diabetes
- Provides feelings of motivation



## References

1. Smith, M., Saison, J., & Segal, J. (2014). *Depression: Signs and Symptoms*. Retrieved December 1, 2014 from: <http://www.helpguide.org/articles/depression/depression-signs-and-symptoms.htm#what>
2. Depressionhurts.ca (2013). Retrieved December 1, 2014 from: <http://depressionhurts.ca/en/>
3. Older Adults and Depression (2014). Retrieved December 1, 2014 from: <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/older-adults-and-depression/index.shtml>
4. Datillo, J., (2008) *Leisure Education Program Planning: A Systematic Approach*. Venture Publishing Inc. State College, Pennsylvania
5. Health Benefits of Physical Activity (2004). Retrieved December 1, 2014 from: <http://www.medicinenet.com/script/main/art.asp?articlekey=10074>