Women & Depression

Promoting Wellness, Recovery, and Resilience

“Now’s The Time For Change”

For questions, concerns or more information, please contact 1-800-722-9866 or 7-1-1 for TTY users

County of San Bernardino
Department of Behavioral Health
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Resources

211 San Bernardino
Dial 211 to get information & referrals for health and social services.
Get connected with a live operator 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

ACCESS Unit
Children, Youth and Family Services
888-743-1478 or 888-743-1481

National Alliance on Mental Illness
Http://www.nami.org

National Institute of Mental Health
http://nimh.nih.gov

National Mental Health Association
www.nmha.org
Contrary to popular belief, clinical depression is not a “normal part of being a woman” nor is it a “female weakness.” Depressive illnesses are serious medical conditions that affect more than 19 million American adults age 18 and over each year. Depression is a treatable medical illness that can occur in any woman, at any time, and for various reasons regardless of age, race or income.

**Contributing factors**
- Developmental
- Reproductive
- Hormonal
- Genetic
- Stress
- Family responsibilities
- Roles and expectations of women
- Increased rates of sexual abuse
- Poverty

**Women’s Attitudes Toward Depression:**
- More than one-half of women believe it is “normal” for a woman to be depressed during menopause and that treatment is unnecessary.
- More than one-half of women believe depression is a “normal part of aging”.
- More than one-half believe it is normal for a mother to feel depressed for at least two weeks after giving birth.
- More than one-half of women cited denial as a barrier to treatment while 41% of women surveyed cited embarrassment of shame as barriers to treatment.
- In general, over one-half of the women said they think they “know” more about depression than men do.

**Gender differences**
- Women experience depression at roughly twice the rate of men.
- Girls 14-18 years of age have consistently higher rates of depression than boys in this age group.
- Although men are more likely than women to die by suicide, women report attempting suicide approximately twice as often as men.
- An estimated 15% of people hospitalized for depression eventually take their own lives.

**Co-occurring Illnesses**
Research shows a strong relationship between eating disorders (anorexia & Bulimia nervosa) and depression in women. About 90-95% of cases of anorexia occur in young females. Also, one out of three depressed people also suffers from some form of substance abuse or dependence.

**Treatment**
- Depression in women is misdiagnosed approximately 30 to 50% of the time.
- Fewer than half of the women who experience clinical depression will never seek care.

Fortunately, clinical depression is a very treatable illness. More than 80 percent of the people with depression can be treated successfully with medication, psychotherapy or a combination of both.