



DEPRESSION AWARENESS MONTH

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October is Depression and Mental Health Education and Awareness Month. The World Health Organization estimates 5% of adults struggle with depression globally. Read more about depression and use this month to encourage conversations about mental health.

Mental health

As we move forward from the COVID-19 pandemic, more people are dealing with mental health issues like depression than ever before. Mental health has been stigmatized in the past, especially at work where people don't want to look like they are struggling. This makes education and awareness even more important now. Medcor promotes an environment where mental health is prioritized and our **Guiding Health Principles** include **Mind Your Happiness** to help our advocates find their joy and mental balance.

Depression

The cause of depression isn't always known and is usually a combination of factors. A person can be predisposed to depression, but stressful or traumatic events like abuse, the death of a loved one, or a

major life change can also cause depression. It could be caused by another medical condition, or even be a side effect of some medications. Depression symptoms can also be caused by or exacerbated by substance abuse. It presents differently in everyone, but these are some common symptoms that can help identify someone with depression:

- › Deep, profound sadness that interferes with focus and completing tasks
- › Lack of motivation
- › Excessive sleeping or insomnia
- › Changes in weight from overeating or loss of appetite
- › Feeling guilty or worthless
- › Withdrawing from activities



Anyone can experience depressed feelings at times, but if you are dealing with these feelings for prolonged periods (several weeks), you should be evaluated for depression.

Treating Depression

Taking steps to treat depression looks different for everyone. The combination of antidepressants and psychotherapy is an effective treatment for many because the medication helps control symptoms, and therapy teaches healthy coping mechanisms for new challenges. Some patients benefit from therapy without the use of medication, and some choose to treat depression with lifestyle changes like exercise.

Everyone knows that exercise, or as we say at Medcor Moving Your Body, is good for your health. When you are depressed, it is hard to find the motivation and get started, but even five minutes of activity a day can help build up to 10 minutes until you are engaging in 30 minutes of activity a day. Exercise can only benefit your mood and should be considered

in every treatment plan. The best combination of therapies, medications, and exercise as a treatment plan will be unique to each patient.

Be A Mental Health Ally

What if you are taking care of your mental health, but you think a friend is struggling? You don't have to have to be a professional counselor to show your concern. Encouraging a conversation or guiding someone to resources could be the difference in them getting help, so don't underestimate your influence to destigmatize depression and mental health.

988 is a U.S.-based Mental Health Emergency Hotline. If you are experiencing difficult thoughts, call or text 988 to talk to someone now.

Resources:

1. [Depression \(who.int\)](#)
2. [Depression | NAMI: National Alliance on Mental Illness](#)
3. [Exercise is an all-natural treatment to fight depression - Harvard Health](#)
4. [Mental Health Conditions: Depression and Anxiety | Overviews of Diseases/Conditions | Tips From Former Smokers | CDC](#)