

Depression in Elders

About Depression in Elders

Depression is a mood disorder and chronic medical condition. It's characterized by feelings of sadness, anxiety, and/or apathy that lasts more than two weeks and impact a person's ability to function normally. Depression not only affects the way you feel, but also the way you think and act. Older adults have a higher risk of developing depression, but there is no single, specific cause.

Depression in Elders Facts



Risk Factors & Symptoms for Depression

While older adults face some of the same stressors as most individuals, risk factors include chronic pain, loneliness, elder abuse / trauma, grief, and a loss of purpose. Symptoms can include persistent sadness, apathy or lack of caring about anything, irritability, fatigue, a sense of hopelessness, insomnia, or constant thoughts of death.



Ways to Protect Mental Health

Ways to increase resilience and mental health includes getting enough sleep, 7 - 9 hours of good sleep per night. Staying active with simple exercises such as walking, swimming, or light yardwork. Staying social fights off loneliness and isolation, which are a leading risk factor for depression. Eating a well balanced meal prevents medical conditions that can lead to depression.



Statistics

While most older adults are not clinically depressed, 80% suffer from at least one chronic disease.

25%

of individuals in long-term care suffer from depression, 50% goes untreated.



While depression can have a profound impact on your quality of life, this condition is highly treatable. Depression treatment is found to work just as well in older adults as it does in younger populations.