



THE INSTITUTE FOR HEALTHY FAMILIES OF NORTH TEXAS

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Dealing with Clinical Depression

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Moderate to Severe Depression is very real and debilitating to the point of being unable to hold a job or care for a family. Such persons have so much emotional pain and despair that they either cannot sleep or cannot get out of bed. They are tired and listless with no energy to get through the day. They lose interest in interacting with others and don't enjoy life.

People with **Mild Depression** may be functional enough to continue working and caring for their family, but they are sad and their unhappiness is noticeable among family, friends and co-workers. Screening is available from most licensed mental health professionals to determine if you need further evaluation by a medical professional.

Persons who are depressed are also at risk of abusing alcohol and drugs which add to spiraling defeat. They may be victims of abuse from a spouse or they may be abusive to a spouse and/or children. Don't wait until you or a loved one suffers from emotional or physical abuse.

Do you recognize these symptoms in yourself or someone close to you? Have you talked with your primary care physician about the symptoms? If not, that is the first step. A medical doctor may recommend prescription medication to help elevate your mood. The second step is to arrange for "talk therapy" with a licensed mental health practitioner. The third step is to hold on to the belief that you can feel better.

A 1998 research study by Irving Kirsch and colleagues at the University of Connecticut concluded that the effectiveness of recovery between those suffering from depression who received an anti-depressant medication and those receiving a placebo was negligible. Both cohort groups believed their medication was working and both groups got better! (*Newsweek, Feb 8, 2010, pp. 35-41*) The article also concluded that prescriptions and treatment plans for depression that do not include psychotherapy are expensive and may not be as effective over time.

If your doctor has diagnosed depression and prescribed medication, inquire about the benefits of "talk therapy" to help change negative thinking about yourself and your world. Mental health practitioners who use **Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)** are trained to listen and help you examine the negative and irrational thoughts that are keeping you in a state of despair. You can learn to reframe negative thoughts into positive thoughts, set realistic goals, and begin to live life more fully.

For more information about treatment plans that include Cognitive Behavioral Therapy techniques for those suffering from depression, contact the **Institute for Healthy Families of North Texas**. There is no charge for an initial 30-minute appointment to determine if we are the right counselors for you.

If you or anyone in your family needs marriage and family counseling or personal counseling to address changes in your life, check out our web site at www.texasicounselors.com. Our rates are affordable.