

body MIND

Your Monthly Guide to Good Health

SYMPTOMS OF ADOLESCENT DEPRESSION

Because it is normal for teenagers to keep their emotions to themselves, adolescent depression can be difficult to diagnose. The American Academy of Pediatrics reports that parents should watch for some or all of the following symptoms:

- Changes in sleep pattern
- Unexpected weeping or excessive moodiness
- Eating habits that result in noticeable weight loss or gain
- Expressions of hopelessness or worthlessness
- Paranoia & excessive secrecy
- Self-mutilation or mention of hurting himself or herself
- Obsessive body-image concerns
- Excessive isolation
- Abandonment of friends or social groups

TREATMENT

Everyone gets the blues on occasion; however, depression is a real and serious condition. Fortunately, once identified, depression is treatable. Treatment may include talk therapy, antidepressant medication, or a combination of the two.

HELP FOR PARENTS

Adolescence is a transitional time that can be turbulent and challenging for both teenagers and their parents. To help detect signs of trouble, consider the following suggestions.

- Maintain open and honest communication with your teenager.
- Be alert to dramatic changes in your teenager's behavior.
- Stay informed by talking to your child's pediatrician about common mental health disorders.
- Be attentive to any problems at school or home regardless of whether symptoms of depression are present.

If you suspect that your teenager is experiencing symptoms of depression, consult a mental health professional for diagnosis and treatment options.

As many as one in thirteen teenagers experience depression at some time, and during adolescence girls become twice as likely as boys to experience bouts of depression, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics. Because untreated depression can lead to suicide, it is vital to seek diagnosis and treatment for your teenager if you suspect that he or she is suffering from depression.

FACE FACTS ABOUT TEEN DEPRESSION

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HAVE A SHOT AT A HEALTHY SCHOOL YEAR

Vaccines prevent many dangerous childhood diseases including measles, mumps, polio, rubella (German measles) and varicella (chickenpox). Vaccines work by exposing the body to a modified form of a disease. The body's immune system responds by developing the ability to fight off future infection. Vaccinations have dramatically reduced infectious diseases worldwide, but if vaccinations were stopped, epidemics of these diseases would return. Ask your child's pediatrician to recommend the right vaccination schedule for him or her.

For a referral to a Lake Health pediatrician near you, call the Best of Health Line at 1-800-454-9800. To visit Lake Health's online physician directory, scan this QR code with your smartphone.

