

# The Mortar & Pestle

## Volume 3 Issue 9

### Stafford Pharmacy and Home Healthcare

#### MENTAL HEALTH: DEPRESSION

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##### What is depression?

Each of us experiences some happy and some sad times, but for most of us the unhappy feelings are only temporary. For some, the sad feelings last a long time and can become severe. Depression isn't just a mood swing, it is a serious medical condition that requires treatment in the same way that high blood pressure or an infection does.

##### What causes depression?

It has been shown that depression is caused by an imbalance of chemical substances in the brain. To date the chemical messengers that research has focused on, are serotonin and noradrenalin. What induces these changes within the brain is unknown.



##### Who does depression affect?

In Canada, 1 in 10 people will develop an episode of major depressive disorder (the medical diagnosis for depression). Depression can affect people of all ages including young children. Despite recent awareness campaigns, many still worry about what others will think of them for being depressed and do not seek medical help.

##### What are the symptoms of depression?

When someone is experiencing depression, almost every facet of their life can be affected. Symptoms can be emotional and/or physical. When someone is depressed, their symptoms interfere with their day to day activities and are present for at least 2 consecutive weeks.

- Loss of interest and lack of pleasure in activities that were previously enjoyed
- Feelings of despair, sadness, worthlessness, hopelessness and guilt
- Detachment from your friends, family and daily life
- Always feeling tired and lacking energy
- Crying without a reason
- Difficulty concentrating or forgetfulness
- Loss or gain of appetite or change in sleep pattern (sleeping too much or not enough)
- Aches and pains (headaches, joint pain, stomach upset)
- Thoughts of death or suicide

##### How is depression treated?

Depression is a treatable illness that does not go away on its own. There are a variety of medications that can be used to treat depression to the point of complete relief of symptoms.

If you think you or someone you know may be suffering from depression, speak with a medical professional today. Don't suffer in silence, *depression is a curable illness.*

## STRESS

Stress is a normal response that is created when your body reacts to an event. It is the body's way of protecting you. When the stress response is working properly, it helps you stay focused, alert and energetic. In emergency situations, it is your body's stress response that can save your life by giving you extra strength, or quickening your response time. However, beyond a certain point, stress stops being helpful.

It is estimated that 1 in 3 doctor's visits are related to stress. This is because even small amounts of stress over time can lead to health problems if left unchecked. Here are a few signs that your stress is becoming too much for you to handle:

- You eat when you are nervous, sad or angry
- You have put on excess belly fat
- You feel overwhelmed by simple tasks
- You worry about things, big or small
- You feel tired and fatigued for no apparent reason

### 3 Steps to Personalized Stress Relief



If you have one or many of these symptoms, speak with a member of our pharmacy team today. At **Stafford Pharmacy, we offer the Identi-T Personalized Stress Relief Program by Metagenics.** This program uses a simple assessment that can be done on your own, which helps to identify the cause and type of stress you are experiencing. Based on the results, the pharmacist can recommend the right nutraceutical to help you start feeling good again.

Don't let stress control your life. We're here to help you take the first steps toward a solution.

## IMPROVE YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

When we think of health, we tend to concentrate on our physical health. However, mental or emotional health is equally important. Here are a few simple tips to help you improve or maintain good mental health in order to boost your mood, become resilient and add to your enjoyment of life!

- Do something to positively impact others
- Learn about or discover new things
- Enjoy the beauty of nature or art
- Engages in meaningful and creative work
- Get a pet (there is nothing better than unconditional love)
- Make leisure time a priority
- Make time for contemplation and appreciation
- Join networking and special interest groups that meet on a regular basis
- Spend time with family and friends daily, social interaction can significantly reduce stress



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