

23 WORLD HEALTH DAY 2017 MESSAGE DEPRESSION LET'S TALK

The World Health Day this year focuses on 'depression'.

Globally, around 350 million people of all ages, from all walks of life, suffer from depression. It causes mental anguish and impacts on people's ability to carry out even the simplest everyday tasks, with sometimes devastating consequences for relationships with family and friends. At its worst, depression can lead to suicide, now the second leading cause of death in 15-29-year olds.

Depression can be prevented and treated. A better understanding of what depression is, and how it can be prevented and treated, will help reduce the stigma associated with the condition, and lead to more people seeking help.

World Health Day is celebrated on 7 April to mark the founding of WHO.

Campaign at a glance

World Health Day, celebrated on 7 April every year to mark the anniversary of the founding of the World Health Organization, provides us with a unique opportunity to mobilize action around a specific health topic of concern to people all over the world. The theme of our 2017 World Health Day campaign is depression.

Depression affects people of all ages, from all walks of life, in all countries. It causes mental anguish and impacts on people's ability to carry out even the simplest everyday tasks, with sometimes devastating consequences for relationships with family and friends and the ability to earn a living. At worst, depression can lead to suicide, now the second leading cause of death among 15-29-year olds.

Yet, depression can be prevented and treated. A better understanding of what depression is, and how it can be prevented and treated, will help reduce the stigma associated with the condition, and lead to more people seeking help.

This guide is for you

If you are reading this campaign guide, you are probably interested in getting involved in the campaign. That's great, because achieving campaign goals will only be possible if we work together.

Whether you work for the government, a nongovernmental organization or a media outlet, whether you are a doctor, teacher, journalist, blogger, parent or simply someone who has heard about the campaign and would like to get involved, this guide is for you.

What we are trying to achieve

The overall goal of this one-year campaign, beginning on 10 October 2016, World Mental Health Day, is that more people with depression, in all countries, seek *and get* help.

More specifically, we are aiming to achieve the following:

- the general public is better informed about depression, its causes and possible consequences, including suicide, and what help is or can be available for prevention and treatment;
- people with depression seek help; and
- family, friends and colleagues of people living with depression are able to provide support.

What is depression?

Depression is an illness characterized by persistent sadness and a loss of interest in activities that you normally enjoy, accompanied by an inability to carry out daily activities, for at least two weeks. In addition, people with depression normally have several of the

following symptoms: a loss of energy; a change in appetite; sleeping more or less; anxiety; reduced concentration; indecisiveness; restlessness; feelings of worthlessness, guilt, or hopelessness; and thoughts of self-harm or suicide.

The campaign core

At the core of the campaign is the importance of talking about depression as a vital component of recovery. The stigma surrounding mental illness, including depression, remains a barrier to people seeking help throughout the world. Talking about depression, whether with a family member, friend or medical professional; in larger groups, for example in schools, the workplace and social settings; or in the public domain, in the news media, blogs or social media, helps break down this stigma, ultimately leading to more people seeking help.

The slogan

The campaign slogan is: Depression: let's talk.

Who we are targeting

Depression can affect anyone. So this campaign is for everyone, whatever your age, sex, or social status. At the World Health Organization, we have chosen to pay particular attention to three groups that are disproportionately affected: adolescents and young adults, women of childbearing age (particularly following childbirth), and older adults (over 60s). Materials targeting these audiences are available in the campaign materials.

Overarching messages

- Depression is a common mental disorder that affects people of all ages, from all walks of life, in all countries.
- The risk of becoming depressed is increased by poverty, unemployment, life events such as the death of a loved one or a relationship break-up, physical illness and problems caused by alcohol and drug use.
- Depression causes mental anguish and can impact on people's ability to carry out even the simplest everyday tasks, with sometimes devastating consequences for relationships with family and friends.
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- Untreated depression can prevent people from working and participating in family and community life.
- At worst, depression can lead to suicide.
- Depression can be effectively prevented and treated. Treatment usually involves either a talking therapy or antidepressant medication or a combination of these.
- Overcoming the stigma often associated with depression will lead to more people getting help.
- Talking with people you trust can be a first step towards recovery from depression.

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- Something that can happen to anybody.
- Not a sign of weakness.
- Treatable, with talking therapies or antidepressant medication or a combination of these.

What you can do if you think you are depressed

- Talk to someone you trust about your feelings. Most people feel better after talking to someone who cares about them.
 - Seek professional help. Your local health-care worker or doctor is a good place to start.
 - Remember that with the right help, you can get better.
 - Keep up with activities that you used to enjoy when you were well.
 - Stay connected. Keep in contact with family and friends.
 - Exercise regularly, even if it's just a short walk.
 - Stick to regular eating and sleeping habits.
 - Accept that you might have depression and adjust your expectations. You may not be able to accomplish as much as you do usually.
 - Avoid or restrict alcohol intake and refrain from using illicit drugs; they can worsen depression.
 - If you feel suicidal, contact someone for help immediately.
- Remember: Depression can be treated. If you think you have depression, seek help.

Worried that your child is depressed?

2016-2017

Growing up is full of challenge and opportunity—starting and changing school, making new friends, going through puberty and preparing for exams ... Some children take change in their stride. For others, adaptation is harder, causing stress and even depression. If you are worried that your child might be depressed, read on.

What you should know

- Depression is an illness characterized by persistent sadness and a loss of interest in activities that you normally enjoy, accompanied by an inability to carry out daily activities, for at least two weeks.
- Additional signs and symptoms of depression during childhood include withdrawal from others, irritability, excessive crying, difficulty concentrating at school, a change in appetite or sleeping more or less.
- Younger children may lose interest in play. Older children may take risks that they would not normally take.
- Depression is both preventable and treatable.

What you can do if you think your child might be depressed

- Talk to him or her about things happening at home, at school and outside of school. Try to find out whether anything is bothering him or her.
- Talk to people you trust who know your child.
- Seek advice from your health-care provider.
- Protect your child from excessive stress, maltreatment and violence.
- Pay particular attention to your child's wellbeing during life changes such as starting a new school or puberty.
- Encourage your child to get enough sleep, eat regularly, be physically active, and to do things that he or she enjoys.
- Make time to spend with your child.
- If your child has thoughts of harming him- or herself, or has already done so, seek help from a trained professional immediately.

Remember: If you think your child might be depressed, talk to him or her about any worries or concerns, and seek professional help if needed.

Worried about the future? Preventing depression during your teens and twenties

2016-2017

Adolescence and young adulthood present many opportunities – for meeting new people, visiting new places and finding a direction in life. These years can also be a time of stress. If you are feeling overwhelmed rather than excited by these challenges, read on.

What you should know

- Depression is an illness characterized by persistent sadness and a loss of interest in activities that you normally enjoy, accompanied by an inability to carry out daily activities, for at least two weeks.
- In addition, people with depression normally have several of the following: a loss of energy; a change in appetite; sleeping more or less; anxiety; reduced concentration; indecisiveness; restlessness; feelings of worthlessness, guilt, or hopelessness; and thoughts of self-harm or suicide.
- Much can be done to prevent and treat depression.

What you can do if you are feeling down, or think you may be depressed

- Talk to someone you trust about your feelings.
 - Seek professional help. Your local health-care worker or doctor is a good place to start.
 - Stay connected. Keep in contact with family and friends.
 - Exercise regularly, even if it's just a short walk.
 - Stick to regular eating and sleeping habits.
 - Avoid or restrict alcohol intake and refrain from using illicit drugs; they can worsen depression.
 - Continue doing things you have always enjoyed, even when you don't feel like it.
 - Be aware of persistent negative thoughts and self-criticism and try to replace them with positive thoughts. Congratulate yourself on your achievements.
- Remember: There is a lot that you can do to keep mentally strong. If you feel that you may be heading for depression, talk to someone you trust or seek professional help.

Staying positive and preventing depression as you get older

2016-2017

The life changes that come with ageing can lead to depression. To learn more about preventing and treating depression in older age, read on.

What you should know

- Depression is an illness characterized by persistent sadness and a loss of interest in activities that you normally enjoy, accompanied by an inability to carry out daily activities, for at least two weeks.
- In addition, people with depression normally have several of the following: a loss of energy; a change in appetite; sleeping more or less; anxiety; reduced concentration; indecisiveness; restlessness; feelings of worthlessness, guilt, or hopelessness; and thoughts of self-harm or suicide.
- Depression is common in older people but often overlooked and untreated.
- Depression among older people is often associated with physical conditions, such as heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes or chronic pain; difficult life events, such as losing a partner; and a reduced ability to do things that were possible when younger.
- Older people are at a high risk of suicide.
- Depression is treatable, with talking therapies or antidepressant medication or a combination of these.

What you can do if you are feeling down, or think you may be depressed

- Talk to someone you trust about your feelings.
 - If you think you are depressed, seek professional help. Your local health-care worker or doctor is a good place to start.
 - Keep up with activities that you have always enjoyed, or find alternatives if previous activities are no longer possible.
 - Stay connected. Keep in contact with family and friends.
 - Eat at regular intervals and get enough sleep.
 - Exercise regularly if you can, even if it's just a short walk.
 - Avoid or restrict alcohol intake and only take medicine as prescribed by your health-care provider.
- Remember: There is a lot that can be done to prevent, and treat, depression in older age.

If you sometimes feel that life seems so hard that it is no longer worth living, read on.

What you might be thinking or feeling

- The pain seems overwhelming and unbearable.
- You feel hopeless, like there is no point in living.
- You are consumed by negative and disturbing thoughts.
- You cannot imagine any solution to your problems other than suicide.
- You imagine death as a relief.
- You think everyone would be better off without you.
- You feel worthless.
- You feel very lonely even when you have friends and family.
- You do not understand why you are feeling or thinking this way.

What you need to remember

- You are not alone. Many other people have gone through what you are going through and are alive today.
- It is okay to talk about suicide. It can help you feel better.
- Having an episode of self-harm or suicidal thoughts or plans is a sign of severe emotional distress (perhaps as a result of the loss of a loved one, loss of employment, a relationship break-up, or experience of violence or abuse). You are not to blame and it can happen to anyone.
- You can get better.
- There are people who can help you.

What you can do

- Talk to a trusted family member, friend, or colleague about how you feel.
- If you think you are in immediate danger of harming yourself contact the emergency services or a crisis line, or go there directly.
- Talk to a professional, such as a doctor, mental health professional, counsellor or social worker.
- If you practice a religion, talk to someone from your religious community who you trust.
- Join a self-help or support group for people with lived experience of self-harm. You can help each other to feel better.

Remember: If you feel like life is not worth living, reach out for help. You are not alone. Help is available.

Source :WHO website www.who.int