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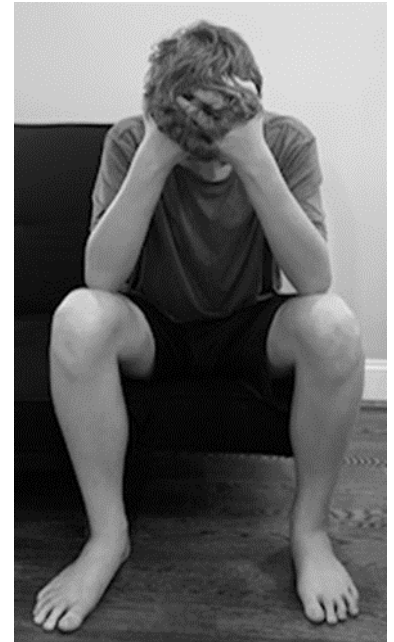
Worried That Your Teen May Be Depressed?

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We all know the typical teen stereotype that teens are moody. Try to remember your own teen years...intense feelings, edgy emotional highs, and then plummeted into stress and heartache over what now seems insignificant. Depression is a different matter. It is not plain moodiness, it is a mood disorder – a serious mental health condition that can sometimes lead to suicidal thoughts and behaviors. The average age of depression onset is 14 years old. By the end of their teen years, 20% of teens will have depression, but 80% of those teens will not receive help. More concerning, drug and alcohol abuse is often a way teens “self – medicate”

Symptoms of Teen Depression

- An irritable, sad, empty or cranky mood and belief that life is meaningless
- Loss of interest in sports or activities that they used to enjoy
- Withdrawal from friends and family
- Changes in appetite, significant weight loss or gain
- Excessive late night activities, too much or too little sleep, trouble getting ready
- Physical agitation or slowness, pacing back and forth, excessive repetitive behaviors
- Making critical comments about themselves, overly sensitive to rejection
- Frequent complaints of physical pain (headaches, stomach)



KEEP IN MIND THAT THESE SYMPTOMS IN ISOLATION ARE ALSO INDICATORS OF NORMAL TEENAGE MOODINESS. SEEK HELP FROM A TRAINED HEALTH OR MEDICAL PROFESSIONAL.

How to Communicate with Your Teen When You Suspect Depression

- Focus on listening, not lecturing
- Be gentle, but persistent
- Acknowledge their feelings
- Make face time a priority
- Combat social isolation
- Get your teen involved
- Make physical health a priority
- Limit screen time
- Encourage plenty of sleep
- Involve other family members

