

Did You Know? A bimonthly column from:
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The holidays are fast approaching! For some, they are seen as a well-deserved break from school. For others, it is an opportunity to spend more time with friends and family members. However, for some individuals, this time of the year may mean a change in routines and schedules, learning about grades, trying to plan for the spring semester etc. It may mean a time for feeling lonely and depressed. It may be a signal of **depression**.

What is depression? Depression is a prolonged and persistent deep sadness that interferes in many aspects of one's life. It is accompanied by feelings of worthlessness, guilt, loneliness, hopelessness and self-doubt. Suicidal thoughts may be present. Please take a few moments to answer the questions* below.

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| 1. I feel sad mostly everyday. | Yes/No |
| 2. I don't enjoy the things that I use to do. | Yes/No |
| 3. I feel others or I would be better off if I were dead. | Yes/No |
| 4. I feel that I am not useful or needed. | Yes/No |
| 5. I notice that I am losing or gaining weight. | Yes/No |
| 6. I have trouble sleeping during the night or staying awake during the day. | Yes/No |
| 7. I am restless and often feel irritable. | Yes/No |
| 8. My mind isn't as clear as it use to be. | Yes/No |
| 9. I get tired for no reason. | Yes/No |
| 10. I feel hopeless about the future. | Yes/No |

Answers: If you (or a friend or loved one) answered "Yes" to at least 5 of these questions OR if you answered "Yes" to question #3, you should seek help immediately.

Although we all experience feeling "being down" from time to time, depression is an intense experience that lasts for an extended period of time. Depression ***can be helped*** by seeing a professional.

If you would like more information about this issue, you may contact *your student assistance counselor. Please remember that the services are free and confidential.*

* The above self-test is adapted from the Zung Self-Rating Depression Scale (Zung, W.K., 1974)