



University of Michigan
Depression Center

THE MICHIGAN DIFFERENCE®

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UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
DEPRESSION CENTER

update

From the Nation's First Comprehensive Depression Center

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WHAT'S INSIDE

Research Targeted
at the College-Aged
Population

~

Mental Health Advice
for Students

~

Depression on College
Campuses

~

The Connection
Between Depression
and Heart Disease

~

Learn More About
Campus Mind Works

~

New Titles in the
UMDC Reading Corner

~

Upcoming Events

~

You Tube



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Depression in the College Population



College

can be one of the most exciting and rewarding times in an individual's life. It represents the opportunity to pursue new knowledge, prepare for a future career and experience life in a new way. It can also be a very challenging time for students who may be at risk for or already diagnosed with a mental illness. The peak for onset of depression and other psychiatric disorders is between 15-24 years of age. This means that a depressive illness can occur just when academic pressures are mounting and students are adjusting emotionally to complex life changes. These changes may include leaving home for the first time, forming new relationships, having greater access to alcohol and drugs, sleeping irregularly, and being forced to care for themselves. Being "on their own" for the first time can be overwhelming for many students.

In recent years, the number of college students diagnosed with depression or bipolar illness has increased steadily. University of Michigan research shows that as many as 15 percent of all college students may have symptoms of depression, and about 10 percent of college students arrive on campus with a history of the illness. However, depression and related illnesses can remain hidden and left untreated. The disorder may not be easily recognized by faculty or staff, or students may attempt to actively hide their symptoms because of academic or social pressures. The good news is that treatment tends to be most effective when it is begun early, especially in the years surrounding young adulthood.

In particular, it is important for new students, transfer students and student veterans to understand the warning signs of depression and have a strong support system in place. To learn more about depression in the college-aged population, please visit Campus Mind Works at www.campusmindworks.org.

Research Targeted at the College

Several faculty and staff members of the University of Michigan Depression Center are focused on research around depressive illnesses in the college-aged population.

THE EFFECTS OF SOCIAL CONNECTIONS AND OFF-CAMPUS LIVING ON STUDENTS NEW TO THE UNIVERSITY

Steve Brunwasser, a doctoral candidate in clinical psychology, is focused on research detailing a student's transition to college. Mr. Brunwasser is currently evaluating a small group of first semester freshman and transfer students in a long-term study aimed at tracking their experience. He has found that an individual's depressive symptoms tend to fluctuate considerably during the first years of college, and that transfer students to have more depressive symptoms than do freshmen. He believes these findings could be related to living off-campus. Transfer students living off campus had significantly higher levels of depressive symptoms than both freshmen and transfers living on campus. Transfers living on campus started with high levels of symptoms, but by mid-semester, their symptoms dropped to a level comparable to the freshmen. The mediator in the two groups of students tends to be social connectedness—those students who have a strong support system or feel connected in some way to campus life fare better than those who do not. Mr. Brunwasser is also interested in clarifying whether having depression is a reason that



some students choose to live off-campus, as a means of isolating themselves.

Mr. Brunwasser hopes to continue to conduct research focusing on depressed students, but would also like to look more closely at students who are succeeding while living off-campus, in order to create better models of establishing social connectedness for those students who are struggling.

HEALTHY MINDS HELP DETERMINE HEALTHY COLLEGE EXPERIENCES

Depression Center member Daniel Eisenberg, Ph.D., an Assistant Professor at the U-M School of Public Health, is leading a national research project called the Healthy Minds

Study. Through the study, students at campuses across the country are being surveyed about depression, anxiety, stigma and help-seeking behavior. The goal is to identify how many students have specific disorder-related symptoms, how many are receiving care, and why they do or do not seek treatment. The study also explores the roots and prevalence of stigma, knowledge and beliefs about treatment in the college-age population.

Long-term research suggests that stigma is lower among young people today than 20-30 years ago. Over 90% of U.S. colleges report a significant increase in requests for education and treatment options related to depressive illnesses. Dr. Eisenberg believes less stigma is part of the story, and he also believes student openness toward mental health is related to greater numbers of adolescents actually receiving mental health treatment, especially medication, prior to entering college. Dr. Eisenberg cautions, however, that stigma surrounding psychiatric illnesses remains prevalent in the general population and those with mental health disorders still worry about being labeled.



Advice for College Students

- Have a dependable support system of friends, family, and campus professionals.
- Maintain regular sleep patterns, even on weekends and vacations.
- Get plenty of regular exercise and eat a healthy diet. Avoid alcohol and never abuse drugs.
- Manage your stress. Seek academic help when you need it and don't be afraid to get guidance for roommate, financial or relationship concerns.
- Depression is a treatable illness. If you suspect you may be depressed, see your doctor.
- Treatment is ongoing—don't stop your treatment as soon as you feel better. Always consult your doctor before making treatment changes.
- If you have been receiving treatment back home, make sure you have referral arrangements worked out before you get to campus.
- Learn how to manage depression—become a partner with your clinicians, and refer to trusted books and Web sites for information www.campusmindworks.org.
- If you are a U-M student veteran, seek the unique tools created for your successful transition to college at the U-M Veteran's Connection (www.vets.umich.edu).
- Counteract stigma by talking about depression and using honest and appropriate language.

College-Aged Population

The Healthy Minds Study has been fielded at 26 colleges across the country and 26 more will join the study in the spring of 2010. Over 15,000 students have completed the online survey, making this one of the largest studies in the field. The University of Michigan compiles and provides the data from the study, and a customized report to each university taking part in the research for a small fee. The study authors have worked diligently to keep costs low as a means of encouraging more universities to take part in the study.

Dr. Eisenberg, who is trained in economics, is most interested in studying the college population because of the potential value of investment in mental health of college students. College is a peak period of onset for mental disorders, but college also

provides an ideal opportunity to reach people—to identify students with disorders, provide prevention strategies, and reach students in different ways. The possibility for improving life-long outcomes by identifying depression and other mental health disorders early and cost effectively is promising. Dr. Eisenberg plans to build on the Healthy Minds Study by using the data as a foundation for the development and evaluation of interventions and programs. He is currently working with fellow U-M Depression Center member Cheryl King, Ph.D., Professor of

Psychology and Psychiatry and Director of the Institute for Human Adjustment, on a program she leads aiming to understand the effect of improving treatment-finding to lower suicide risk in college students. In addition, Dr. Eisenberg is co-PI on a randomized trial with 32 campuses evaluating the effectiveness of a program called Mental Health First Aid, which provides mental health education and training for laypeople.

from our director

As a part of the University of Michigan, the Depression Center has a special responsibility to college students. Our mission emphasizes early detection and treatment of depression and bipolar disorder to reduce the duration and severity of these illnesses. With increasing numbers of college students requesting mental health services, the Center has created the Campus Mind Works program to provide the tools and resources U-M students (and others) need to be successful during their college years.

In addition to serving the local U-M student population, the Depression Center is dedicated to extending education and outreach around the topic of depression in the college-aged population nationally. Each March we gather the best minds from across the country to address this important health topic. The eighth annual Depression on College Campuses conference will take place this year from March 10-11. I invite you to attend this conference to learn about the latest programs and strategies underway to help students here and on campuses elsewhere.

While February is heart month, the only organ in the human body deemed as critical to our survival (if not more so) is the brain. Since depressive illnesses tend to co-occur with cardiovascular disorders, it is important that when you think about your heart health, you remember your brain health as well. The U-M Depression Center and Cardiovascular Center work together in an integrated and collaborative way to find answers for patients who are at special risk or who suffer from both illnesses. This collaboration allows for more successful treatment, innovative research and greater reach when it comes to educating patients and their loved ones about these two commonly co-occurring illnesses.

Stay warm this winter and please remember, whatever your age or current health status, don't forget to be vigilant about your brain health!

Merci,



John F. Greden, M.D.



The eighth annual
Depression on College
Campuses event
Many Faces, A New Look
will take place
March 10-11, 2010

at the
University of Michigan
Rackham Graduate School.

For more information
about the event, please visit
the events section
of this newsletter or visit
our Web site at

www.depressioncenter.org/docc/.

We hope to see you there!

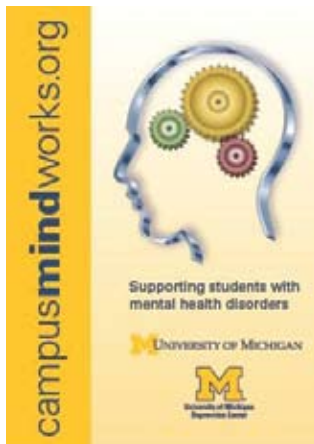
A Depressed Brain and an Unhealthy Heart



February is heart month, a reminder of the importance of good cardiovascular health and fitness. But did you know that cardiovascular disease and depression actually tend to co-occur? One in five people with heart disease have depression while one in five sufferers of a heart attack have depression. Heart disease increases the risk of depression while depression can increase the risk of heart disease and complications from the illness. Due to the nature of the disorder, a person who is depressed may forget to take daily heart medicines or have habits like smoking, consuming too much alcohol, not exercising and eating a poor diet, which can complicate a heart disease diagnosis or put an individual at risk of heart health problems. In addition, depression and high stress can lead to high blood pressure, a weak immune system and irregular heart beats increasing the risk for cardiovascular disease or stroke.

This February, when you think about ways to better care for your heart, consider how to take better care of your brain as well. Depression is a treatable condition and you can help your overall health by recognizing it

continued on page 6



New Initiative Provides Additional Support for College Students with Depressive Illnesses

The new Campus Mind Works (CMW) initiative was developed by the Depression Center and the U-M Division of Student Affairs, in collaboration with schools and colleges across campus, to help support University of Michigan students with chronic mental health disorders and to reduce the stigma of depressive illnesses.

The first phase of the CMW project produced a comprehensive, easy-to-navigate Web site that was launched in September 2009. The site provides information and resources to help students manage their illness and get the most out of their college experience. Through campusmindworks.org, students can, either individually or in collaboration with a health care provider:

- Make a plan to stay healthy within the context of the unique challenges of college life;

- Connect with the resources and support services that are most appropriate for their specific needs, through an extensive database;
- Transfer their mental health care from home to campus;
- Use self-care strategies in conjunction with their mental health treatment;
- Access information about mental health disorders, treatments, medications, and insurance.

The Web site's self-care resources include:

- An online medication diary for students to track their medication usage over time and print a summary form to take to their health care provider
- A checklist of steps to consult before leaving campus for long breaks
- Interactive worksheets on topics such as identifying possible stressors and recognizing cognitive distortions

- A printable medication/insurance wallet card.

The second phase of the project, which began this fall and is ongoing, includes further development, refinement, and evaluation of the Web site, and expansion of outreach activities such as panel discussion sessions for students, presentations to faculty and staff, and focus groups with students and clinicians.

Ultimately, the goal of Campus Mind Works initiative to help to facilitate early intervention, reduce barriers to help-seeking, and dispel many of the myths and stigma surrounding mental illness.

Campus Mind Works was made possible by the vision of Waltraud "Wally" Prechter, who has been crucial in her support of the University of Michigan and the Heinz C. Prechter Bipolar Research Fund. Initial funding for Campus Mind Works initiative as provided by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education.



Depression Center

Upcoming Events

UMDC READING CORNER

Listed below are recommended books on the topic of college-aged depression. You can find these books, media and many other resources, at the FRIENDS Depression Education Resource Center, located in the east atrium of the Depression Center building.

College of the Overwhelmed (2004)

Richard Kadison and
Theresa Foy DiGeronimo

***Student Depression: A Silent
Crisis In Our Schools and
Communities (2007)***

Marcel Lebrun

***Letting Go: A Parents' Guide
to Understanding the
College Years (2003)***

Brian Quinn

***Talking with College Students
about Alcohol (2006)***

Scott T. Walters and John S. Baer

***The View From Here: Depression
on College Campuses (2002)***

University of Michigan

***The Truth About Suicide:
Real Stories of Depression in
College (2004)***

American Foundation for
Suicide Prevention

DEPRESSION CENTER BRIGHT NIGHTS EVENTS

Bright Nights are community forums providing the opportunity to obtain up-to-date information on a variety of topics related to depression. For the complete listing of Bright Nights programming, event information and locations, please visit the Depression Center Web site: www.depressioncenter.org.

Upcoming Bright Nights Events:

January 26, 2010: "Talking through Depression: What We Know about Effective Psychotherapy for Mood Disorders," Ann Arbor District Library

DEPRESSION CENTER COLLOQUIUM SERIES

The U-M Depression Center Colloquium Series is designed for health professionals and researchers with an interest in depression and related illnesses. The Colloquia take place from 11:45 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. in the Depression Center auditorium. Lunch is served for those who pre-register, and there is no charge. Continuing education credits are available for physicians, psychologists, and social workers. To register, please visit www.depressioncenter.org

Upcoming Depression Center Colloquium Events:

Friday, February 5, 2010: Depression in Physicians and Medical Students

Friday, April 23, 2010: The Role of Pro-Inflammatory Cytokines at the Depression-Pain Interface

Funding for the Colloquium Series is provided by an educational grant from AstraZeneca.

SAVE THE DATE! DEPRESSION ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES CONFERENCE: Many Faces | A New Look

March 10-11, 2010

Rackham Graduate School
915 East Washington Street
Ann Arbor, Michigan

How can college campuses go beyond simply acknowledging the diversity of depression, and begin to implement effective programs? Join us to explore new research findings and discuss innovative strategies for identifying and treating depression across student identity groups.

The conference will feature a choice of intensive three-hour workshops in addition to keynote presentations, panel discussions, and concurrent sessions. Online registration is now open. To register, please visit www.depressioncenter.org/docc. Registration is FREE for all students from any campus. The registration fee for non-students will be \$125 before March 1st, or \$140 after March 1st. The fee includes a reception on March 10 and continental breakfast on March 11.

For more information, please visit www.depressioncenter.org or contact Trish Meyer at 734-763-7495 or meyerpa@umich.edu.

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*For more event information online, please visit
www.depressioncenter.org/events*

FOR MORE INFORMATION

about featured book selections
[www.depressioncenter.org/
ResourceCenter](http://www.depressioncenter.org/ResourceCenter)

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You've received this newsletter because you elected to be added to our mailing list, or because you have been identified as someone interested in advances in the treatment and prevention of illnesses.

If you want to be added to or deleted from our mailing list, please contact Kady Davenport at kdavenpo@umich.edu or 734-936-8309.

Information about depression is available online. Please visit our Web site at www.depressioncenter.org.

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from A Depressed Brain and an Unhealthy Heart, continued

and taking steps to address it. If you think you or a family member may have depression, schedule an appointment with your primary care doctor or request a referral for a psychiatrist. It is important to mention any concerns about your heart or mental health to your doctor immediately. See a therapist if you are struggling with a stressful event in your life or if you are feeling depressed. The escalation of stress can be very harmful to both a person at risk of depression and/or heart disease. Counseling has been shown to be very effective in treating many people with depression and can also be helpful for a non-depressed patient going through another difficult medical problem like heart disease. Talk to your doctor about taking an anti-depressant medication if your symptoms do not improve with therapy alone. These medications can be an important part of your depression treatment and most are safe to take when being treated for heart disease.

The U-M Depression Center and Cardiovascular Centers currently collaborate to treat patients suffering from co-occurring depression and heart disease. New treatment options and individualized patient care plans are regularly being improved for this common pairing of illnesses. For more information, please contact the Ambulatory Psychiatry intake line at (734) 764-0231.

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