



NINE SURPRISING PHYSICAL SIGNS OF DEPRESSION

Do you have headaches, pain and digestive problems? Could your physical signs be linked with depression?

Depression can have many origins. One of these is thought to relate to a problem in the regulation of networks of nerve cells. These nerve cells connect the areas of the brain that work on emotional information.

Some of these networks also process information that detects physical pain – hence the depression/pain connection.

Because of this, some experts suggest that people affected by depression feel pain differently. And, that pain can be ongoing and even worsen over time in those who have depression.

A UNIQUE MIX

The kind of symptoms associated with depression are non-specific i.e. they can be connected with many conditions. Physical symptoms are also unique to the individual. For both these reasons, it can be tricky

to connect physical problems and mental illness in the first place.

THE PAIN/DEPRESSION CONNECTION

Physical problems that might signal emotional illness include:

- 01 Headaches
- 02 Dizziness
- 03 Tiredness
- 04 Back pain
- 05 Muscle aches
- 06 Joint pain
- 07 Appetite changes – from loss of interest in food and food cravings leading to weight gain or loss
- 08 Digestive problems – from diarrhoea and constipation to indigestion and nausea.
- 09 Sleep problems – from not being able to get to sleep, to not sleeping restfully, to sleeping too much and waking early.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Speak with your GP. There are many effective new treatments that can help you feel better – physically and emotionally. If you do have depression, treating it may alter the chemicals in nerve cells ensuring that they communicate more effectively. And this may help to ease physical problems, too. On the other hand, easing depression may lift physical symptoms, including pain.

What's most important is that you don't feel that your symptoms are trivial or will go away on their own. You don't need to put up with feeling unwell. Modern treatments are quick and effective and designed to meet your individual needs.

So get the help you need and the help that you deserve – do it for you and for those who love you.

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