

# **An Overview of Depression**

## **Depression: What is it?**

A Chronic illness requiring long term treatment related to the normal emotions of sadness and bereavement

**5 or more of the following nearly every day for 2 weeks may occur**

- **Depressed mood**
- **Diminished interest or pleasure in all or nearly all activities**
- **Decreased appetite, weight loss in the absence of dieting, or weight gain**
- **Insomnia or hypersomnia**
- **Fatigue or loss of energy**
- **Diminished concentration or indecisiveness**
- **Thoughts of death, suicidal ideation**

# Scope of the Problem

One of the most common health conditions in the world

Lifetime incidence in the United States:

12% in men

20% in women

# Surgeon General's Report on Mental Health: Race, Culture, and Ethnicity

## **Mental illness affects all**

- **Striking disparities in MH care for African Americans, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, Hispanics, and Native Americans**
  - 50% less likely to receive services than Whites
  - Poorer quality of care (misdiagnosis, underuse, overuse)
  - Underrepresented in MH research
- **Disparities impose great disability burden on these affected population groups, which together constitute an emerging majority**

# Institute of Medicine Report: Unequal Treatment

- **Racial and ethnic disparities exist regardless of socio-economic status:**
  - Higher morbidity and mortality from the leading causes of death (CV disease, diabetes, HIV/AIDS, etc)
  - Poorer quality of care
  - Worse outcomes—“death gap”

# Cultural Divide

- **High likelihood of ethnic and cultural differences between health providers and patients**
- **Disproportionately low number of health and mental health professionals of color**
- **Lack of training about the importance of cultural and ethnic factors in health care**

# People of Color: Mental Health Care

- **Stigma and extreme shame**
- **Use of alternative sources of help (faith, family, folk treatment)**
- **Limited services in native language**
- **Use of crisis services (poorer prognoses)**
- **Reliance on physicians and other medical professionals providing primary care**



# People of Color and Impact of Health and Mental Health Disparities

- **Experience disproportionately high rates of chronic diseases, heart disease and stroke, diabetes, arthritis, HIV/AIDS, and cancer that commonly co-occur with depression, which if undiagnosed, untreated, or poorly treated, can compromise medical outcomes**
- **Combination of the above with the common socio-economic contextual factors POC experience creates a recipe for poor outcomes of disability and premature death**

What percentage of  
people with  
depression in the United  
States receive  
treatment for the their  
illness?

**Answer: 50%**

Why do you think that is?

Answer: multifactorial

- Access to medical care
- Cost of treatment
- STIGMA

## **The Effect on Other Illnesses**

**People with diabetes, epilepsy, or ischemic heart disease with concomitant major depression have poorer outcomes than do those without depression.**

**Risk of death from suicide, accidents, heart disease, respiratory disorders and stroke is higher among the depressed**

**Effective treatment of depression may reduce mortality or improve the outcome after acute MI or stroke and lower the risk of suicide**

# **Causes:**

- **Unpleasant or unfortunate circumstances of life**
- **A Chemical imbalance**

# Things To Do

- Talk to someone: get a medical evaluation and treatment as needed
- Talk to a friend
- Have people pray for you, and pray for yourself
- Care for any chronic medical conditions
- Remember, that the most powerful remedy is the Scriptures you hold in your hand

## *Studying The Bible will give you:*

**Courage for the crisis (Joshua 1:6&9 Psalms 27:3)**



**Peace in the midst of a storm (John 14:27)**

**Energy when you are tired (Isaiah 40:28-31)**

**Comfort when you are mourning (Isaiah 61:3)**

**Encouragement even in your final illness (Psalms 23)**

**A blessed hope (Titus 2:11-13 I Thessalonians 4:13-18 I Corinthians 15: 51-57)**

**A plan for your life (Proverbs 3:5&6)**

**A more abundant life (John 10:10)**

**Eternal life (Revelation 21 & 22)**

