



Depression and men

Depression is very common in Australia. Around one million Australian adults live with depression each year. On average, one in six men and one in four women will experience depression in their adult lifetime.

Depression affects both men and women, but quite often what they experience and how they respond is different. Men are more likely than women to recognise and describe the physical symptoms of depression, such as feeling tired or losing weight. They may also acknowledge feeling irritable or angry, rather than saying they feel low.

Because of this, depression in men is often not picked up by themselves or by others – including doctors. If depression is not detected, it can't be treated and then it has the potential to become severe and disabling.

It's vital that people learn to recognise depression in men because depression is treatable and effective treatments are available.

beyond maturityblues peer education sessions

Growing older is a positive experience for many and for most people it's a time of life with new freedoms and opportunities including for travel, spending more time with friends and family and time to explore new interests.

As we age, we may start to notice changes in physical health, can feel socially isolated and lonely, and may have experienced grief and loss from the death of friends and loved ones as well as a loss in independence, health, home and lifestyle. Challenges like these can be a trigger for depression, however contrary to popular myths; depression is not something which occurs naturally as we get older.

beyondblue and Councils on the Ageing all around Australia have teamed up to deliver free educational sessions on depression and anxiety to community groups. Sessions specifically targeting depression and anxiety in men are also available. These discussions are delivered by older people who are volunteers and trained to talk about depression and anxiety to their peers. They provide a good opportunity for older for men and their family members and friends to ask questions and learn more about depression from a person their own age. Additionally, sessions are available in other languages (Italian, Greek, Chinese and Vietnamese) presented by bi-lingual peer educators.

Already, almost 60,000 older people have attended the *beyond maturityblues* peer education sessions across Australia. To enquire about upcoming sessions near you, call the COTA in your State or Territory or visit the COTA website at www.cotaaustralia.org.au

For more information about depression, anxiety and related conditions visit www.beyondblue.org.au or call the info line on 1300 22 4636.

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