

MEDICAL BREAKTHROUGHS **RESEARCH SUMMARY**

TOPIC: DEPRESSION: CRISIS WITHIN A CRISIS
REPORT: MB #4782

BACKGROUND: Depression, clinical depression, depressive disorder- many names, but the symptoms remain the same: feelings of helplessness, hopelessness, and despair. These symptoms cause emotional and physical problems, are intrusive, and effect your day-to-day abilities and circumstances. Although depression can appear only once in a patient's life, extended over a certain period of time, many patients suffer from chronic or recurring depression. This disorder can affect kids and teens as well as adults and seniors. Warning signs may include, disruption of sleep, emotional outbursts, anxiety or agitation, trouble thinking, morbid thoughts, or unexplained physical problems. The lifetime suicide rate of people with major depression is 15% and can also be lethal in other ways like increased rate of heart disease.

(Source: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/depression/symptoms-causes/syc-20356007>)

CURRENT TREATMENTS: Since the late 1980s doctors have been prescribing selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors, also called SSRIs, and they are the among the most prescribed medications. However, these prescriptions are not without their side effects. Most commonly, depression patients that take SSRIs report insomnia, headaches, pain, decreased libido and sexual performance, and a more potential serious problem of diminished blood clotting; however, the risk that SSRIs will incite or illicit violent or self-destructive actions are at the center of the antidepressant controversy. In 2004, the Food and Drug Administration initiated a Black Box Warning on SSRIs, its strongest available measure short of withdrawing a drug from the market.

(Source: <https://www.health.harvard.edu/mind-and-mood/what-are-the-real-risks-of-antidepressants>)

NEW OPTIONS: Depression is one of the most common clinical disorders and the most effective form of treatment remains cognitive behavioral therapy. Cognitive behavioral therapy has an enduring effect that protects against subsequent relapse and recurrence following the end of active treatment, something that cannot be said for medications. Robert Manson, founder of Letters Against Depression, says that the simple act of reaching out, talking, and having someone there for you can actually save lives. To write or receive a letter to aide in depression treatment, visit the Letters Against website. Another form of treatment is transcranial magnetic stimulation, also called TMS, that uses magnetic fields to stimulate nerve cells in the brain to improve symptoms of depression when medications have failed.

(Source: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2933381/>,
<http://www.lettersagainst.org/>.)

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THIS REPORT, PLEASE CONTACT:

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If this story or any other Ivanhoe story has impacted your life or prompted you or someone you know to seek or change treatments, please let us know by contacting Marjorie Bekaert Thomas at mthomas@ivanhoe.com