

NEWS AND FEATURES

Depression: What Every Woman Should Know

(NAPS)—Women experience clinical depression about twice as often as men, but the good news is that this common illness is highly treatable.

Symptoms of depression last two weeks or longer and include sadness, loss of interest, pessimism, worthlessness or guilt, anxiety, changes in sleeping and eating habits, fatigue, poor concentration, irritability, thoughts of death, and chronic aches and pains.

Seeking treatment early is important...

Varied factors unique to women's lives may play a role in the development of depression in those vulnerable to the illness, say experts at the National Institute of Mental Health.

Hormonal cycles, stress, victimization, and certain personal-

ity patterns are possibly significant factors on which research is now focused.

Regardless of contributing factors, standard treatments for depression are effective for a majority of women. Seeking treatment early is important, especially for depressed mothers, whose illness can negatively affect their children's development.

Common treatments for depression are medication, psychotherapy, or a combination of the two.

Only a qualified professional can decide which treatment is right for an individual. With appropriate treatment, nearly 80 percent of those with depression can begin to feel better, most within a matter of weeks. For a free brochure about women and depression, write: depression, Dept. W, Rockville, MD 20857; or call 1-800-421-4211.

A cure for cold sores?

(NAPS)—Cold sores, those ugly blisters that crop up around the mouth, are a lot like an unpleasant relative—they show up when you least expect them, and nothing can keep them away forever.

Eight in 10 Americans will get a cold sore at some point in their lives. Unfortunately, once you've had a cold sore, it will keep coming back.

According to Dr. Pol Vandembroucke, director of medical affairs for Bayer Corporation, the makers of Campho-Phenique® Cold Sore Gel, there is no cure for cold sores.

"Medical evidence has shown that so-called cures based on diet or vitamin therapies simply do not work," he said.

"The only thing cold sore sufferers can do is try to avoid things

that cause a recurrence and, if the blisters do reappear, apply a treatment to speed them on their way." Cold sores are caused by a type of herpes virus.

Colds and flu, excessive exposure to sun and wind, menstruation, stomach problems and stress can all cause a recurrence.

Dr. Vandembroucke advises the use of a skin protectant to reduce cracking, plus a local anesthetic or counter-irritant to control discomfort. Cracked cold sore blisters are subject to infection, which can slow down the healing process. Antibiotics have no effect.

To receive a free brochure on cold sores and their treatment, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Campho-Phenique Cold Sore Guide, 99 Cherry Hill Road, Parsippany, NJ 07054.

FREEBIES

(NAPS) For a free, comprehensive brochure, "Women's Guide to Vaginal Infections," write the National Vaginitis Association, 220 South Cook Street, Suite 201, Barrington, Illinois 60010.

For a free brochure with tips on preventing practically every skin problem from dry skin to skin cancer, call the makers of Eucerin Creme at 1-800-655-SKIN.

A list of Medicine for the Public booklets is available free by writing to: Clinical Center Communication, National Institutes For Health, 10 Center Drive, Room 1C255, MCS, 1170, Bethesda, MD 20892-1170.

For a free 12-page recipe booklet with low fat dips, cheesecakes, brownies, and fudge recipes, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to: PHILLY® FREE® Recipe Booklet, c/o Hunter & Associates, Inc., 41 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10010-2202.

For information on children's mental health, call the Center for Mental Health Services at 1-800-789-2647.

Free Online info, 1-800-848-8199 for CompuServe, and 1-800-776-3449 for Prodigy.

A free brochure about the effects of media on children is available by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to: TV and the Family Brochure, Dept. C, American Academy of Pediatrics, P.O. Box 927, Elk Grove Village, IL 60009.

21st century voter registration is here

Becky Cain

President,
U.S. League of Women Voters

This year our voter registration system had an overhaul; it was called the National Voter Registration Act, also known as the motor voter law, and it was long overdue.

Prior to the new law, many states' antiquated voter registration systems were straining to meet the needs of a changing, mobile population.

In some places, laws written years ago were intended to make the registration system convenient

for whoever happened to be the registrar; in other places, they were intended to suit the political parties.

Motor voter, enacted in 1993, was written to make registration convenient for citizens.

Now citizens can register when they go to renew their driver's license, when they apply for assistance at state agencies or by mail.

According to Max Cleland, Georgia Secretary of State, "People are amazed and pleased that the government is taking steps to make life easier for them rather than creating a bureaucratic maze to obtain

essential government services."

As a result of this voter-friendly law, we are now experiencing the largest increase in voter registration in American history—larger even than the increase that occurred after women got the right to vote.

By the next presidential election, 20 million voters will have registered under the new law. This surge suggests that bureaucracy was indeed standing in the way of many people who were not registered.

The National Voter Registration Act is a rare example of a federal law "trickling up" from



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U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

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a lot of fires.

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firefighter—

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