

Depression Facts

By: Carmen Lentz

The word "depression" gets tossed around a lot these days. Listen in on conversations, and you'll hear people talk about "being depressed" about their grades, their financial status, their romantic involvements (or lack thereof), their weight, and so forth. Since so many people say they are depressed about so many topics, it becomes difficult to find the right words to convey what true depression is and what it feels like.

Very often, when we think of a person as being depressed, images of sadness, crying, or loneliness come to mind. These symptoms are certainly part of the picture of depression, but there are other common symptoms that we don't always associate with emotional distress. For example, did you know that unexplained aches and pains may signal depression? Or that digestive problems may be indicative of depression or anxiety?

Most people don't understand that there can be both an emotional and a physical component to depression. Knowing all the signs and symptoms can help to get you linked to

treatment earlier. Here are some of the physical and emotional symptoms to watch for that may indicate assessment for treatment is indicated:

- Physical symptoms:
- *A change in sleep patterns – sleeping poorly, sleeping excessively, interrupted sleep
 - *Feeling tired, or conversely, feeling restless
 - *Difficulty concentrating
 - *Weight change – either a loss of appetite with accompanying weight loss or an increase in appetite with weight gain.
 - *Nagging aches and pains that don't get better
- Emotional symptoms:
- *Feeling sad or empty
 - *Feelings of worthlessness, guilt, or hopelessness

- *Loss of interest in usually enjoyable activities or hobbies
- *Suicidal thoughts

Everyone is going to have an "off" day once in a while. However, if you or someone you know has experienced some of these symptoms for more than a couple of weeks, an assessment by a trained provider is advisable. Feel free to stop by the Counseling Center in Student Health and Wellness for more information about depression and its treatment. The Counseling Center also has a copy of the video *The Truth about Depression: Real stories of depression in college* that is available for student groups, classes, or anyone who is interested to see.

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Ping My Health

By: Carmen Lentz

Would you like to know how your health habits compare to other people your age? Would you like to know where you could improve your health habits? Would you like to get a free, personalized report on how you're doing sent to your inbox? Well, you can!

St. Andrews is participating with other colleges across the US in an online health promotion program entitled Ping My Health. The program assesses the health habits of college students nationwide and provides participants a feedback report across six health areas: alcohol and drug use, smoking, physical activity, nutrition, sexual activity, and mental health.

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After 125 surveys are completed on our campus, SAPC will get a summary report which helps us identify areas where health The information on individual participants is confidential, and you are the only person who sees your report. educational programming would best serve our campus.

As a bonus for participants, the PingMyHealth site is offering a chance to win an iPod. St. Andrews is offering two \$50.00 cash prizes that will be awarded when 125 or more surveys are completed on campus. To register to win, simply print the "Thank you" page which appears after you finish the survey and drop it off in the Ping My Health box in the Student Affairs Office. Any questions? Call Carmen Lentz in Counseling Services at ext. 5036. Thanks

Stemming From a Cell

By: Melody Kirkpatrick

Stem cells are cells that can help repair damaged cells and tissues. Stem cell research has been in the mouths of many celebrities. Celebrities are joining forces to help raise funds concerning stem cell research. Celebrities from different backgrounds such as Michael J. Fox ("Spin City"), Sheryl Crow (singer/songwriter), Jeff Suppan (Kansas City Royals), Patricia Heaton ("Everybody Loves Raymond") and Kurt Warner (Arizona Cardinals) are doing their part to spread the news about stem cell research.

There are three types of stem cells. Embryonic, fetal and adult stem cells are the three types being studied. Embryonic stem cells are the most controversial because to obtain them the embryo is destroyed. The embryo starts off with only fifty to one hundred and fifty cells. These cells develop into the two hundred types of different cells found in adults.

Embryonic stem cells are versatile because they can become any cell in the human body. Here is how that works, you see embryonic cells have not matured into any specialized cell. They are just beginning to develop with the embryo. For example, muscle cells, brain cells, and heart cells are specialized cells. They are

already mature and function for their specific organ. The specialized cells can not change into any other cell.

Since the embryonic cells are versatile, it makes it harder for the scientist to control them. The embryonic cells can turn into any other cell in the body. They can even turn into unintended cells. Here is another example, if you need liver cells, the embryonic cells you are implanted with might turn into heart cells instead of the liver cells. Another disadvantage of embryonic stem cells is that they can grow rapidly causing tumors.

The fetal stem cells (cord blood stem cells) are obtained from the umbilical cord after birth. The good thing about fetal stem cells is that they might be used more often than embryonic stem cells because it is safer for the embryo. Also, they have the same characteristics of embryonic cells. They too can change into other cells.

Adult stem cells are the easiest to deal with because they are mature and specialized cells. Researchers know the functions of adult stem cells depending on which organ in the

body they were harvested from. Adult stem cells have been used for people who have blood disorders such as leukemia. Leukemia is treated by bone marrow transplants. Bone marrow transplants are simply adult stem cells repairing damage done.

Some disadvantages of adult stem cells are they are more difficult to grow in a laboratory, they can't change into any other cell and there are not a lot of them in the body. On the bright side, if implanted, they have a very low risk of tumor growth and they are no threat to your immune system.

Every cell in the human body starts off as a stem cell in an embryo. Stem cells need more research for researchers to further understand how they work and function. Once researchers can understand the complexities and their outcomes, people with injuries and diseases would be on a better path to healing.

Stop the Spread of Infection

By: Sue Grooms

The spread of infection can be controlled if everyone will adhere to these basic hygiene measures:

Keep your hands clean by washing thoroughly with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

Wash any cut or break in the skin with soap and water and apply a clean bandage daily.

Avoid contact with other people's wounds or bandages.

If you do assist with wound care, wear gloves and after removing the gloves immediately wash your hands and forearms.

Avoid sharing personal items such as towels, washcloths, razors or toothbrush.

All wounds should be covered with a bandage. Make sure that you wash your hands before and

after changing the bandage.

If you have a cut or wound come to Health and Wellness and pick up some ointment and band aids.

The number one way to prevent infection is hand washing!