TIP SHEET: DEPRESSION

Depression is something that millions of people deal with every year. It is more than having the "blues" or feeling "down". People suffering from depression have extreme difficulty doing things that we usually take for granted, such as waking up, showering, eating meals, going to work or out with friends. When you are depressed you feel sapped of energy and can lack any desire to do anything enjoyable. Fortunately, this condition is treatable, and people can live happier lives.

UNDERSTANDING DEPRESSION

The causes of depression can range from a chemical imbalance to some sort of psychological trauma, like childhood abuse or neglect, or extremely stressful situations. Experts have commonly accepted that depression can be hereditary, and people with a family history of depression are more likely to become depressed if conditions are right, like experiencing a trauma or facing overwhelming stresses.

Whatever the cause, the symptoms are the same:

- Insomnia
- Sleeping more
- Fatigue or loss of energy
- Prolonged lack of interest in once pleasurable activities
- Significant changes in appetite
- Weight gain/loss
- Poor concentration
- Increased irritability or restlessness
- Excessive or uncontrollable crying spells
- Preoccupation with death/dying or suicidal thoughts

TREATING DEPRESSION

There are many options when treating depression. The use of medications prescribed by a psychiatrist has proven to be effective when dealing with more severe forms of depression. Getting psychotherapy from a mental health professional has also been effective in helping people overcome past traumatic events and better manage stressors in their lives. Using a combination of both psychotherapy and medication has been effective for people who are suffering from more severe forms of depression.

For additional information about depression, or to speak with a mental health professional that can help you determine the best options for you, call SupportLinc. If you are thinking about suicide, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK. Your call will be routed to their nearest crisis center to receive immediate counseling and local mental health referrals.