

The Relationship between Sleep and Depression.

When suffering from depression, sleeping can become hard work as those worried thoughts floating around in your head contribute to frequent stirring which in turn results in difficulty getting into enough of a relaxed state to doze off in bed. It is thought that around four fifths of people seeking medical advice for depression have some sort of problem getting to sleep. It is not just trouble getting off to sleep that is experienced by people who are depressed; in about 15% of victims, oversleeping is also a common occurrence. This is particularly true amongst young adults and people suffering manic depression. Such behavior is often justified by the sufferer because staying in bed is seen as a way to remain separated from the issues which brought about the condition in the first place.

There is evidence suggesting a link exists between sleep and depression in a cause and effect relationship that, if not addressed, can result in both conditions becoming worse. Poor sleeping patterns are seen as a core symptom of clinical depression, and experts suggest that people with insomnia can go on to develop depression. It is a vicious trend which can be difficult to buck: your worries hamper your sleep, your tiredness then stimulates more woes about not sleeping making the situation worse. The more tired you become the harder it is to handle everyday tasks such as maintaining a healthy diet and social/work routines.

Depression can seriously impair ones appetite, often resulting in the victim avoiding eating and losing an unhealthy amount of weight. However, it does not always go this way and sometimes depressed people will find 'comfort eating' helps their condition. This undeniably results in weight gain which is not good because drastic changes in weight have been proven to negatively affect your health and have harmful ramifications on your sleeping pattern.

How sleep problems can cause depression

Everybody knows that a bad night's sleep will hamper how we perform our daily tasks, and, consequently, our moods are likely to fluctuate. The truth is that a long running sleeping disorder will eat away at energy levels and, as your mood deteriorates, it will slowly begin to take the enjoyment out of tasks performed as part of your everyday life – which is the first step towards clinical depression.

People suffering from insomnia are far more likely to suffer clinical depression than those who sleep sound and comfortably in bed at night. Severe sleeping disorders combined with depression have been linked to an increased risk the patient may commit suicide.

Treatments

Experts are becoming increasingly confident that exercise has anti depressant properties, and carrying out regular exercise is proven to help people sleep better. Even a bit of light exercise during the day (such as a walk to the shops or taking the stairs instead of the lift) can help sleep related problems in addition to providing a welcome distraction from things you might be dwelling on. Having said this, taking exercise a few hours before going to [bed is not recommended as sleeping becomes much less likely when your heart is racing!](#)

About the Author

It is probably a much better idea to try to combat sleeping disorders and depression through behavioral changes before enquiring about medication, however with the symptoms being so diverse, every patient will obviously need treating individually. For some sufferers, prescribed anti depressant drugs may be the answer whereas for others a new [bed](#) or [mattress](#) may be the answer to a good night's sleep.