Adolescent Cycle of Depression

STRESSORS
Medical illness
Family problems
School problems
Relationship problems

THOUGHTS & FEELINGS
Negative thoughts
Low self-esteem
Sadness
Hopelessness
Irritability

PHYSICAL PROBLEMS
Poor sleep
Pain
Low energy
Poor concentration

BEHAVIOR
Social withdrawal
Decreased activities
Lack of motivation

Scheduling Pleasant Activities

Why scheduling activities is important
- When people are stressed or depressed they often stop doing activities that they used to enjoy and that helped them feel good.

Spiraling Down
- It works both ways – the less you do the more depressed you feel and the more depressed you feel the less you do.

Spiraling Up
- By doing more pleasant activities, even if you don’t initially feel like it, you can break the cycle of depression.

Types of pleasant activities
- Pleasant activities are ones that make you feel better because they are rewarding, meaningful, inspiring, relaxing, or fun.
- They don’t have to be special activities. In fact, most are everyday activities.

Pleasant activities I plan to do:
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Remember to take care of yourself by getting enough sleep, being active, eating healthy, doing stress reduction activities, etc.
Facts about Antidepressants and Teens

- The medications we recommend are safe, and dangerous side effects are rare.
- They take time to work.
- They work best when you take it every day and in combination with talk therapy.
- They do not change life circumstances directly, but they may enable people to change or cope.

How do antidepressants work?

Depression is a common condition that can result from stress, genetic and biological conditions which can affect the chemistry of the brain. The brain uses chemical messengers to send messages to parts of your brain and body. In depression, there may be an imbalance of these messengers and antidepressants help them work better.

What about side effects?

Most side effects are mild and go away with continued use after 1-2 weeks of starting medication or increasing the dose when your body adapts to the medication.

Common side effects include:
- Stomach ache or upset stomach
- Constipation or diarrhea
- Dizziness
- Nervousness/Jitteriness
- Headache
- Difficulty sleeping or sleepiness during the day

If the side effects are intolerable or do not go away, talk to your PCP before stopping the medication. Stopping abruptly may make you feel worse.

What is the course of treatment?

- A small test dose is given for a few days to start treatment.
- The dose is gradually increased to dose that is most effective and best tolerated for you.
- Selecting a medication that works for you may take a few tries.
- It is important to stay on the medication for at least 6-12 months.
How will I know I am getting better?

- As people begin to recover from depression, the first symptoms that usually improve are problems with sleep and appetite.
- After that, energy and interest in activities improve, as do the ability to think clearly and to function more productively.
- The last symptom to improve is the feeling of being depressed and discouraged. This may take up to 6 weeks before you notice a difference.

What are the risks?

Antidepressants may increase the risk of suicidal thinking and behavior in some children, adolescents and young adults with Major Depression. Studies suggest that the benefits outweigh the risks. Many episodes of adolescent suicidal thoughts or actions are initiated by a traumatic event or conflict.

If there are any increased:

- thoughts of suicide or dying
- attempts to commit suicide
- acts of aggression or with dangerous impulses
- other unusual changes in behavior or mood

Call your healthcare provider or the crisis line immediately!

Remember!

- Take the medication every day and keep your appointments.
- Track your medication and order your refill 3-5 days in advance to make sure you don’t run out.
- Don’t stop the medication before talking to your healthcare provider. If you stop taking the medication suddenly, you may experience dizziness, tingling, confusion.
- Keep track of side effects and discuss with your health care provider.
- Continue to take even when you are feeling better.
- Do not use alcohol or other substances as they impact your mood and the effectiveness of antidepressants.

Multnomah County Crisis Line
503-988-4888
Toll Free: 1-800-716-9769