

## Physical Effects of Depression

Anonymous 5.8K reads

Our minds and bodies do not exist separately from each other. On the contrary – they constantly influence each other, and the changes in one, show up as symptoms in the other.

Mood disorders can often result in physical issues, while medical conditions can easily cause stress, depression or other mental health problems. Simply put, if one is affected, the other will suffer as well. But what about depression? What are the main physical health problems associated with this mood disorder?



The banner features the Explorable logo at the top center, with the text "EXPLORABLE" in a large, bold, white font and "Quiz Time!" in a smaller, white, cursive font below it. Below the logo are three square images, each with a white border and a white caption underneath. The first image shows a pair of red roller skates on a wooden deck, with the caption "Quiz: Psychology 101 Part 2". The second image shows a fan of colorful pencils, with the caption "Quiz: Psychology 101 Part 2". The third image shows a Ferris wheel at sunset, with the caption "Quiz: Flags in Europe". To the right of these images is a white button with the text "See all quizzes =>" in red.

## Depression Alters Your Sleep

As you already know, sleep loss and disturbed sleep are common symptoms depression. People who experience depression may not be able to get a good night's sleep, because they're fixated on certain negative topics and thoughts.

### Negativity Deteriorates Sleep

The negative emotions that result from rumination cause stress and agitation, which, in turn, don't allow you to fall asleep, or lead to sleep disturbances.

A lack of healthy sleep disturbs your ability for impulse-control, makes you easily angered, leads to memory disturbances, poor decision-making, fatigue, loss of creativity, decline of

social skills, physical weakness, weight gain and others.

## **The Link Between Depression and Migraines**

Research suggests that there is a relationship between chronic migraines and depression. A migraine is a strong headache, that occurs repeatedly, over the course of months, for several hours or even days. It can also cause light-sensitivity, nausea and vomiting.

### **A Cycle of Pain**

People who experience frequent migraines are more prone to depression and at the same time, depression can enhance the unpleasant effects of headaches.

Although a clear relationship has not yet been established, it is worth considering the effect of depression, when it comes to migraines, since that can provide another treatment outlet.

## **Depression Is Painful**

Besides chronic headaches or even migraines, those who suffer from depression often experience a lot of physical and emotional pain.

### **Psychosomatic Suffering**

Unlike physical trauma, which allows us to locate the exact point of injury, depression may lead to a variety of excruciating aches. These are called psychosomatic symptoms and happen when a mental health problem manifests in a physical way.

Those who struggle with psychosomatic symptoms may be in terrible pain, but physicians are not able to find any bodily disorders. This can lead to a lot of frustration, in addition to an already large struggle.

## **Depression Affects Weight**

When your entire life is influenced by depression, even the basic act of eating, can easily turn into a problem.

Some people lose their appetite, when they feel depressed, while others tend to engage in comfort eating. Food may therefore either become a way fill an emotional void, or an empty activity, lacking enjoyment or anticipation.

Additionally, depression is closely tied to struggles, such as bulimia and anorexia.

### **A Healthy Solution**

In case depression affects your appetite, you can combine healthy eating habits with behavioral activation. [1] For example, instead of ordering food, you can cook it yourself.

Not only will you enjoy a nice home-cooked meal, but you'll also increase your activity level by shopping for ingredients, preparing the food and washing the dishes after you finish.

## Depression Leads to Fatigue

Fatigue is often characterized as a constant state of tiredness, caused by other underlying issues such, as burnout, chronic stress and, of course, depression.

The vicious cycle of depression and fatigue is well known by both medical doctors and mental health professionals. Because of depression, people often can't get enough sleep, engage in self-defeating behaviors and subconsciously avoid positive stimuli, all of which can lead to fatigue.

## You Can Fight Fatigue

Because fatigue robs you of your ability to have a healthy, fulfilling life, and adds fuel to your depressive symptoms, it is important to take action and engage in the effective behaviors, described throughout this course.

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### Links

[1] <https://explorable.com/e/goal-setting-and-behavioral-activation?gid=21950>