

Mental Health

– Depression in Adults –



こころの健康～うつ病とは（大人編）～

What is Depression?

Known as the common cold of mental illnesses, depression can affect anyone regardless of nationality, race, age, or gender. People with depression will exhibit a lack of interest in anything, insomnia, a lack of concentration, and a lack of appetite - and these symptoms will continue for an extended period. There are an estimated 120 million sufferers worldwide. If detected and treated early by a specialist, a person can overcome and recover from depression.

Causes of Depression

Depression can be caused by many things. One's personal lifestyle and activities can cause a lot of stress, but a large amount of stress can also be brought on by differences in culture and language whilst living in Japan. Suffering from continued ill health because of unknown causes can result in depression. If you have worries or concerns, don't try to tackle them by yourself – instead consult a friend or family member.

Culture Stress

Culture stress is the stress that occurs when you change to a different way of living in a new culture and try to deal with the differences in the daily customs and language. Stress may occur within a short time after arrival in a foreign country. Many people strongly feel it after a few months, but can also occur after maybe one or two years of living in a foreign country; experiences vary greatly from person to person.

The most dangerous factors that can contribute to culture stress are: a decline in one's social-economic status, a lack of mutual understanding due to differences in language, separation from one's family, an un-friendly reception in the host country, a difficulty in engaging in common culture, previously affected by post traumatic stress disorder before moving to the host country, old age, and adolescence.

Main Causes of Depression

- **Bad or stressful experiences with someone close.**
- **Stress at the workplace from work or colleague(s).**
- **Stress at home** – discord, domestic violence, loans.
- **Chronic illness** – such as cancer or an incurable disease.
- **A psychiatric disorder** – such as alcohol dependence.
- **The socio-economic climate** – such as a recession or war.

If You Think You Are Suffering From Depression ...

Resting the mind and body is a good step towards successfully treating depression. Although depending upon the symptoms medication maybe required, so if you think you are suffering from depression at first seek advice from a psychiatrist, neurologist, or a mental health specialist.

International Associations – Your Local Resource

Along with the Nagoya International Center there are numerous other local international associations that can offer advice and information to foreign residents. Feel free to contact the Nagoya International Center or an international association close to you if you need assistance in finding a medical facility, need an interpreter, have questions about Japan's medical system, or have any other questions or concerns.



宝くじは
豊かさ築く
チカラ持ち。

宝くじは、広く社会に役立てられています。

Helping Someone with Depression

If you see that a friend's or family member's state of health has declined, discreetly talk to them about it. If notice that they have changes in their sleep patterns or shows strong signs of depression that affect their daily routine, recommend to them that they should rest, relax, and seek treatment.

Before seeking help from a medical professional, please be aware that your local municipal health center and mental health welfare center may have consultation services that you can use. The Nagoya International Center has several free consultation services specifically available for foreign nationals (see below).

If the person needing assistance refuses to seek treatment or attend a consultation, please ask a family member or friend that they trust to recommend the treatment and/or consultation to them. Avoid being strong-handed and do not force them to go; do what you can to persuade them that seeking assistance is a good idea. If they do go to seek treatment, make sure somebody goes with them. Once treatment has started, let them recover at their own pace and do what you can to lessen their daily burden.

Engaging People with Depression – Key Points

- 1) Do not be over concerned
- 2) Do not encourage too much
- 3) Do not try to hunt down the cause of their depression
- 4) Put off making serious decisions
- 5) Allow them to get a good rest
- 6) Check to see that they are taking their medication as prescribed



Preventing Depression

The best way to deal with stress is to find an activity that best helps you get rid of stress. The Nagoya International Center, as well as other local international associations, has information about local activity groups and sports clubs that you can join. Why not give them a call?

- Services Available at the Nagoya International Center -

★ Free Consultations for Foreign Nationals

- 1) **Civic Advisory Service for Foreign Residents** (advice about pensions, insurance, & taxation, and more - Tues to Sat (10:00 - 17:00) - reservations not required - Tel: 052-581-0100
- 2) **Personal Counseling** - Professional native English-speaking counselors are available to provide support to foreign residents who have difficulties with their lives in Japan; by appointment only - Tel: 052-581-0100.
- 3) **Legal Consultations for Foreign Residents** - Saturdays 10:00 - 12:30 - Reservations required; to make an appointment, please leave your name & phone number on the answering machine at 052-581-6111. An interpreter will call you back at a later date to schedule an appointment with you.

★ Information Counter

Information service for foreign residents on daily life and sightseeing in Japan. Available in 7 foreign languages including English, Chinese, Filipino, French, Korean, Portuguese, & Spanish. Japanese & English is available Tuesday to Sunday (09:00 - 19:00). Reservations not required. See our website for service times in other languages - Tel: 052-581-0100.

★ Access & Hours

The Nagoya International Center is conveniently located above Kokusai Center Subway Station on the Sakura-dori Subway Line, exit 2. The Center is closed on Mondays, December 29 through January 3, and the second Sundays of August and February.

Address: Nagoya City, Nakamura-ku, Nagono 1-47-1, Nagoya International Center Building 3F
Website: www.nic-nagoya.or.jp E-mail: info@nic-nagoya.or.jp

Mental Health

– Childhood Depression –



こころの健康～うつ病とは（子ども編）～

Depression is something that can affect anyone, even children. Children live in the same modern society as adults and are, just like adults, susceptible to stress and can develop symptoms of depression. Children are most likely to exhibit signs of depression from around the age of ten. However in younger children, short-term emotional insecurity and development problems are more prevalent. With depression in children, symptoms are not limited to those seen in adult depression. Special care is needed to identify the warning signs.

Childhood Depression – The Key Points

Compared to adults it's not always easy to spot depression in children, because they are less capable of expressing their feelings. Headaches, stomach aches, tiredness and other vague physical complaints which appear to have no obvious cause, doing badly at school, truancy, and other similar problems are common signs of depression in children. It is not uncommon for children to recover from depression in a short time, and many will only suffer from depression once in their lifetime.

Key Point 1 – changes in physical appearance

- Changes in sleep patterns
- Changes in appetite
- Tiredness
- Mood swings throughout the day

Key Point 2 – signs of emotional changes

- Drop off in interest in hobbies; lack of interest in general
- A drop in desire and energy
- Lower grades at school
- Changes in mood
- Changes in attitude and opinion

Key Point 3 – signs of behavioral changes

- Avoidance and withdrawal
- Sluggishness
- Restlessness
- Aggressive speech and behavior
- Self-harm
- Suicidal thoughts



Treatment for Childhood Depression

When meeting with the child's teacher or school counselor carefully listen to what they have to say about the child's condition and discuss with them an effective treatment strategy for the child. If you do not understand Japanese, it would be best to bring along an interpreter. For more information about dispatch interpreters please consult with the Nagoya International Center or your local international association.

Treatment methods include anti-depressant medication, face-to-face counseling, and play therapy. From a range of treatment methods, decide upon a treatment method that will best suit the child. If you have any concerns please take time to fully consult with the head physician. There is medication now available that has few side-effects and is suitable for use with children.

Coping in the Family

Along with treatment by a specialist, contact with one's family is also important.

The attitude of resistance and indifference shown by the child should be understood as not the child's real attitude towards the people that they are most dependent on. You should take the view that coping with depression is equally hard on both child and family.

If the child makes a recovery in a relatively short period of time, discuss with the child's teacher and school counselor on how to create a trouble-free, easy integration back into school life.



- Read up on depression.
- Allow the child plenty of rest.
- Try to understand why the child has problems.
- Try to figure out the pace at which treatment can be given.
- Think of it as a chance to confer with family members.

The Nagoya International Center has information and consultation services available in several languages. See page 2 for further details.



Languages and Parent - Child Communication

The development of a child's language skills change at around the age of 10 from natural acquisition based on the child's surroundings to structured theoretical learning.

Children born in Japan will find learning Japanese easy, but if the parent's native language is not actively acquired then parent-child communication will become difficult. On the other hand, if a child comes to Japan after the age of 10, much study is needed for the child to become proficient in Japanese. It is estimated that takes on average 2 to 3 years to develop to a proficient level in daily conversation, and 5 to 7 years to develop to a proficient level to meet their education needs. If the child has already developed a solid base in the native language, then the child will have the ability to deal with both Japanese and their native language. However, in order to advance the child's native language ability after the age of 10, additional home study will be required.

Stress from living in Japan can be sparked by language difficulty. There is no easy solution if a mutual understanding cannot be obtained between parent and child. In order to achieve a good level of communication with the child, it is necessary for the parent to furnish the child with sufficient ability in one of the languages. In addition, to facilitate language learning and provide meaningful context, the parent should convey knowledge about culture and real-life information to the child.