Many people encounter periods of sadness in their lives, but for some, that sadness goes beyond what most would expect and it becomes a pervasive weight on them. Those people whose sadness becomes a part of their daily lives are probably suffering from depression. Other common symptoms of depression include fatigue or a general lack of energy, inability to concentrate and make decisions, insomnia, lack of interest, recurring thought of death or suicide, loss of weight do to a lack of interest in food. In order to be clinically depressed, the symptoms must be present every day for at least two weeks. <http://www.webmd.com/depression/guide/major-depression?page=2>

Causes of Depression

Not everyone who suffers from an episode of depression has a trigger that causes it, but many do. Some of the more common causes of depression include sense of loss such as from the death of someone close or the ending of a relationship. Another common cause feeling isolated from a group or even society as a whole. A trigger for depression can also be physical, emotional, or sexual abuse. A history of family depression is also common with many who have depression. <http://www.webmd.com/depression/guide/major-depression?page=2>

Diagnosis and Treatment of Depression

A medical doctor or psychiatrist diagnoses depression. The medical professional will ask the patient about their family history and will conduct a psychological screening. There may be some medical tests performed to eliminate the possibility of a physical problem rather than psychological For example, lethargy and loss of energy could be related to a thyroid problem. The doctor may want to run some tests to eliminate medical problems. <http://www.webmd.com/depression/guide/major-depression?page=2>

Treatments

The most common and most effective treatment for depression is medicine; however, it is not uncommon for medicine to be combined with talk therapy. There are many kinds of anti-depressants and doctors will do their best to match the medicine with the symptoms, but ultimately, the only way to find the best medicine is to try it. In more extreme cases doctors might try electroconvulsive therapy which used to be more commonly referred to as shock therapy which sends electricity to the brain in hopes that the brain will operate differently and the patient will no longer be depressed. <http://www.webmd.com/depression/guide/major-depression?page=2>

It is almost impossible to prevent an initial episode of major depression since there is no way to predict what will trigger it or when. There is a better chance of keeping major depression from returning by avoiding those triggers as best as possible in the future. The best way to deal with depression is to acknowledge it and seek professional assistance.