

DEPRESSION

Provided by Deirdre Donovan, Psychiatric RN

It is important to distinguish between being depressed, which we all feel from time to time based upon changing circumstances in our lives, and *clinical* depression, which is a medical condition caused by an imbalance of neurotransmitters in the brain and central nervous system. They are not the same thing. When you start reading about men dealing with prostate cancer treatment side effects who have withdrawn from their relationships, who have no energy or pleasure in anything anymore, who maybe eat too much or too little, sleep whenever they can, and have been acting like this for six months or more.....a complete personality change..... now you're talking about a medical condition that won't very likely resolve on its own without psychiatric counseling and appropriate medication. Because clinical depression is often a manifestation of long term anger and pain, medications help rebalance the neurotransmitters in the brain, but they don't make the anger and pain go away. Psychiatric counseling can help this effect. All else, even concern regarding Erectile Dysfunction (ED) and loss of libido, become secondary to the need to get help for clinical depression. As sad as it is to lose erectile function and the desire for it, it is sadder still to lose one's self. Nothing can be addressed or resolved if unable to get one's self back to a rational mental state.