



"POTTY TALK"



"Check-Up from the Neck-Up"

Although college can be an exciting time, charged with new emotions, new experiences and new challenges, it can also be a confusing time for students filled with anxiety, sadness, uncertainty, and difficulties coping. The transitions of leaving home, family and friends, combined with the challenges of the academic environment easily contribute to feeling lonely and overwhelmed. For some, these feelings just "go away," but for others, they linger. If symptoms persist and you just don't feel "like yourself" anymore, you could be experiencing depression or anxiety. YOU ARE NOT ALONE and help is available for you at SCU.

"Check-Up from the Neck-Up"

Feeling DiScOnNeCtEd?

Anxious? Can't Focus? Trouble Sleeping? No energy?
Sad or crying all the time?

Can't Stand it Anymore?

Come to a FREE, Anonymous,
Mental Health SCREENING

Tuesday, February 19th 11:00 a.m. – 2:00pm
Benson Parlors



The Real Scoop on Antidepressants

Taking an antidepressant medication is a personal choice, one that you should discuss with your treatment provider. Here are some answers to a few commonly asked questions about antidepressants.

How do antidepressants work?

They work in a variety of ways. In most cases, they alter chemicals in your brain called neurotransmitters. They most commonly act on the neurotransmitters serotonin, norepinephrine, and dopamine.

How long do I have to take an antidepressant?

Most doctors recommend you take antidepressants for at least six months. With less time, there is a greater likelihood that your depression will return. If you have had previous experiences with depression, your doctor may recommend that you take them longer.

If I have a bad day, will taking an extra pill work?

No, because they do not work that quickly.

What are the long-term risks of taking antidepressants?

While there are common side effects (headache, nausea, dizziness, and other) that usually subside within a few weeks, there are no documented long term serious side effects commonly experienced with antidepressant use.

Will antidepressants change my personality?

No. When they work, they will alleviate in part or in total the amount of emotional suffering and sadness you experience. You will still experience a range of emotions and your personality will remain unchanged. Research shows that the best approach to dealing with problems with your anti-depressant medication is a combination of medication and therapy.

You should talk to your health care provider if you would like to discuss the pros and cons of antidepressant medication.

Source: http://www.mentalhealth.umn.edu/medication/antidep_bro.pdf



Alcohol: Is it time to make a change?

College students are dealing in a time of personal growth and challenges, where you are faced with many important decisions as you become an emerging adult. One of these challenges is determining the role alcohol plays in your life.

Most students drink responsibly, but some have problems with their drinking. One way to determine if your drinking has become problematic is to ask yourself these questions:

- On several occasions have you used alcohol dangerously (ex. blacking out)?
- Have you had legal problems associated with your drinking (like a DUI)?
- Have friends or family expressed concern about your drinking?
- Are problems with friends and family worsened by your alcohol use?
- Do you drink alcohol every day?
- Do you have to drink more and more to achieve the same effect?
- Do you notice physical sensations when you don't drink (like sweating, fast beating heart, shaking, etc.)?
- Have you stopped doing something you enjoy or that was important because of alcohol?
- Do you drink more or longer than you originally intended?
- Did you try to cut down your alcohol consumption unsuccessfully?



If you answered YES to any of these questions, you may want to consult with a professional about alcohol's role in your life.

Information from <http://healthyminds.org/factsheets/LTF-CollSAA.pdf>

When to Worry About Worrying

High strung? Worried? Anxious? Stressed? Tense? Restless? Panicky? Jumpy?

We have come to think of anxiety as a bad thing. Not true! Anxiety is a natural, normal part of the human experience...especially for students! Think of anxiety as your body's way of telling you to "be prepared." Biologically, it is known as the Fight or Flight Response (remember that from high school bio?). Some anxiety is good. It keeps you on your toes and alert. Once the stressful event is over, normal anxiety will subside with time. An anxiety disorder is when this normal, natural anxiety response is thrown out of whack and the anxious feelings are out of proportion to the stressful event. It can take up a lot of time, make you avoid things you would otherwise find pleasurable, and take a toll on your self-esteem, among other things.



Some common Anxiety Disorders include:

Panic Disorder: Fear of having a panic attack.

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD): When an individual who has been exposed to a traumatic event develops anxiety symptoms, re-experiencing of the event, and avoidance of things related to the event.

Generalized Anxiety Disorder: Excessive and hard to control worry occurring persistently.

Social Anxiety Disorder: fear of social or performance situations in which the person is exposed to unfamiliar people or to possible scrutiny by others. The individual fears that he or she will act in a way (or show anxiety symptoms) that will be humiliating or embarrassing.

Specific Phobia: Individuals experience phobia or unreasonable fear or anxiety in connection with exposure to specific objects or situations and because of this avoid them whenever possible (e.g., heights, spiders, etc.).

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD): Individuals have persistent or repetitive thoughts (obsessions) or behaviors (compulsions). The person feels compelled to continue despite an awareness that the thoughts or behaviors may be excessive or inappropriate, and feels distress if they stop them.

Source: <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/anxiety-disorder/AN01139>



The "Blues" or Depression?

Life is full of good times and bad, happiness and sorrow. But if you've been feeling "down" for more than a few weeks or are having difficulty functioning in daily life, you may be experiencing more than just the "blues." You may be suffering from a common, yet serious, medical illness called clinical depression. **The good news is clinical depression is highly treatable.** Most people with depression, however, do not seek the professional help they need -- often because they don't know the symptoms, think depression will go away on its own, or are embarrassed to talk about how they're feeling.

Clinical Depression is NOT a matter of willpower! It is NOT a character flaw or a sign of personal weakness. You CAN'T make yourself well by trying to "Snap Out Of It."

Signs to watch for:

- Prolonged sadness or unexplained crying spells
- Significant changes in appetite or sleep patterns
- Irritability, anger, worry, agitation, anxiety
- Pessimism, indifference
- Loss of energy, persistent lethargy
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness
- Inability to concentrate, indecisiveness
- Inability to take pleasure in former interests, social withdrawal
- Unexplained aches or pains
- Recurring thoughts of death or suicide



If you're interested in getting a mental 'check-up' there are options for you:

- *Take part in a FREE screening available here at SCU— February 19th from 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. in Benson Parlors,
- *Take an online assessment at <http://www.scu.edu/tcc/screenings.cfm> OR
- *Make an appointment with a counselor at 408-554-4172



"Potty Talk" is brought to you by the Wellness Center.
For more information on these and other health topics, contact:

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