

[IMAGE]

## Missing Work Because of Depression

Do you feel unhappy most of the time? Do you frequently get upset over little things? Do you frequently feel like crying? The answers to these and other seemingly simple questions can be important in diagnosing an all-too-common illness: depression.

Depression can be devastating to everyday life, including family relationships, friendships, and the ability to work. Employers have long coped with employee absenteeism, but a new study reveals that depression may be a substantial contributing factor.

The study used statistical analyses to evaluate more than 6,000 employees at three corporations. Workers exhibiting symptoms of depression were twice as likely to miss work (at least one missed workday in the previous four weeks) due to health reasons, compared with workers without depressive symptoms; decreased job performance was also seven times higher for depressed vs. nondepressed employees. These findings emphasize that depressive disorders persist over time and can have a significant impact on workplace effectiveness.

### *Reference:*

Druss B, Schlesinger M, Allen H. Depressive symptoms, satisfaction with health care, and two-year work outcomes in an employed population. *The American Journal of Psychiatry* 2001: Vol. 158, No. 5, pp731-34.

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