



Depressive disorders among young Canadians: associated factors of continuity and discontinuity.

<https://arctichealth.org/en/permalink/ahliterature161102>

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Source: Can J Public Health. 2007 Jul-Aug;98(4):326-30

Language: English

Publication Type: Article

Keywords: Adolescent
Adult
Canada - epidemiology
Depression - epidemiology - etiology
Female
Health Surveys
Humans
Male
Risk factors

Abstract: The purpose of this study was to compare potential risk factors of depressive disorders among young Canadians (aged 15-24) to those of older age groups (25-34 and 35-44) and examine the contribution of individual and contextual factors in the continuity and discontinuity of depression.

Data from the Canadian Community Health Survey--Cycle 1.2 were analyzed to examine the associations between individual, familial, social and environmental factors and the continuity or discontinuity of depressive disorders among young Canadians. The sample consisted of 5,673 Canadians aged 15-24, 5,830 aged 25-34 and 7,830 aged 35-44. Youths were also categorized according to the type of cases: non-case, new case, case in remission or long-lasting case.

Among Canadian youth, 10.2% had suffered from depression during their lifetime. Social support was the only factor distinguishing the youngest age group from the others regarding depression. Compared to older age groups, stress levels were notably higher for young people. The combination of social network, social support and stress levels strongly distinguished between the long-term cases and the non-cases among youths. Weak feeling of community cohesion was also related to new cases of depression and could contribute to their beginnings.

Potential targets for preventive measures lie in the contextual and social influences of youth; particularly what impacts stress levels, social support and social networks. Studying processes of continuity and discontinuity contribute to identifying distinct profiles of onset, recurrence or remission of depression that may point to avenues for prevention and early intervention.

PubMed ID: 17896746 [View in PubMed](#)