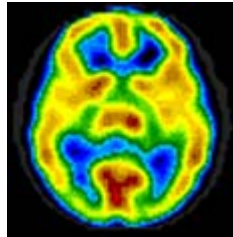
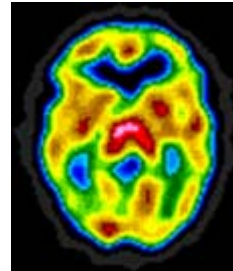


Depression

Inner Views



Normal



Depression

Depressive disorders are the second most pervasive psychiatric conditions in the world (slightly second to anxiety disorders). They affect approximately 19,000,000 American adults. During their lifetime, approximately 5-12% of men and 10-15% of women will have at least one episode of a major depressive disorder. More than half of these people will have another episode of depression at some point in their lives. Twenty percent of patients visiting primary care physicians have depressive symptoms.

The effects of depression are staggering. A recent study sponsored by the World Health Organization and the World Bank found major depression to be the leading cause of disability in the U.S. and worldwide. Eighty percent of suicides are carried out by persons who have depressive illness. Fifteen percent of people who have significant mood disorders commit suicide.

Even though 80-90% of people with major depression can be treated successfully, only about a third of those seek help. The primary reason for this reticence is the stigma associated with admitting to emotional difficulties. Only 38% of Americans believe that depression is a "health" problem. These people view depression as a personal weakness, not a medical illness.

Missing the Mark

The medical profession itself sometimes struggles with accurately diagnosing major depressive disorders and other mood disorders. It has been reported that of those people with mood disorders that have sought help, 29% took over 10 years before receiving a correct diagnosis. And 60% of patients reported receiving an incorrect diagnosis before receiving the correct one. This problem is due in large part to the fact that there is a high degree of variation among people with depression in terms of symptoms, course of illness and response to treatment. This variability poses a major challenge to clinicians attempting to understand and treat depression without use of objective diagnostic testing tools.

Finally, Help & Hope

Brain SPECT Imaging can be a major help to physicians in their diagnosis and treatment of depressive disorders. Brain SPECT Imaging can show us whether the parts of the brain that are generally believed to be involved in depressive disorders are working properly or not. Armed with this information, physicians can better correlate the patient's clinical

symptoms and arrive at a diagnosis that is supported by objective diagnostic evidence. It has been our experience that the ability to visualize one's brain processes most often helps patients accept the existence of the diagnosed condition and enhances patient compliance with their treatment plans.