



SB-YOU: Take Care of Your Mental Health
**Possible Causes of Depression and Anxiety in People
with Spina Bifida**
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People with Spina Bifida may experience depression and anxiety due to the following causes and contributing factors:

- Consequences of hydrocephalus
- Consequences of other organic neuro-anatomical differences in people with Spina Bifida
- Neurochemical imbalance
- Traumatic brain injury
- Frustration, anger, disappointment, sadness, resentment, and/or grief related to:
 - Not being 'normal'
 - Not being able to engage in 'normal' activities due to mobility issues and/or incontinence
 - Not being able to meet 'normal' milestones, or meet 'normal' familial, social, academic, career-related, spiritual, and/or other expectations
 - Not being able to care for yourself or manage health issues satisfactorily
 - Academic or career struggles (sometimes related to hydrocephalus and/or learning disabilities)
 - Feeling dependent on family/parents/caretakers
 - Feeling enmeshed with family/parents/caretakers
 - Feeling ugly, unsexy, or unattractive
 - Feeling sexually unfulfilled
 - Feeling socially awkward or inept
 - Social isolation; lack of meaningful social support
 - Bullying or social ostracism
 - Discrimination, prejudice, and bias (includes 'benign' prejudice and 'positive' stereotypes)
 - Socio-political turmoil or injustice
 - Struggles navigating bureaucracies, especially when it comes to receive benefits or accommodations
 - Problems with or loss of government assistance
 - Financial stress
 - Medical expenses and problems with insurance
 - Lack of access to medical care and medical professionals who have experience caring for people with Spina Bifida
 - Lack of access to accommodations and supports
 - Lack of access to transportation