

HEALTH

Cheslie Kryst and High-Functioning Depression: What Is It, How to Spot It

NATIONWIDE -- Cheslie Kryst was the beautiful former Miss USA who's death came as a surprise to nearly everyone when she leapt off her apartment building to her death. The former Miss USA's death was ruled a suicide, the New York City Office of Chief Medical Examiner confirmed.

Kryst's mother is opening up about losing her daughter.

"I have never known a pain as deep as this. I am forever changed. Today, what our family and friends privately knew was the cause of death of my sweet baby girl, Cheslie, was officially confirmed," her mother, April Simpkins, said in a statement obtained by PEOPLE.

"While it may be hard to believe, it's true. Cheslie led both a public and a private life. In her private life, she was dealing with high-functioning depression which she hid from everyone — including me, her closest confidant — until very shortly before her death," Simpkins continued.

Kryst joins a long list of other high-profile people whose high-functioning depression tragically ended in suicide. Kryst, designer Kate Spade, fashion icon Alexander McQueen and actor Robin Williams are all perfect examples of what high functioning depression is.

"These people are incredibly successful, famous, rich," explains board-certified psychiatrist, Dr. Yalda Safai. "To the outside world, they are on top of the world. They've already achieved everything that we all aspire to achieve. Yet they have been battling with depression their entire lives. It does not matter whether you're successful, rich or famous. Mental illness

does not discriminate. And I think it's incredibly dangerous when a person is high functioning and depressed at the same time, because like I said, those people are least likely to seek help."

What Is High-Functioning Depression?

High-functioning mental illness is a term to describe those living with a mental illness that most people don't detect. It covers a broad spectrum; they might have a job, be studying, dress well, or even have the 'perfect' family lifestyle.

Some symptoms manifest themselves physically with aches and pains or changes in sleeping and eating patterns. Other times, people may seem disengaged from things that once made them happy.

According to a 2015 report by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, an estimated 6.1 million adults aged 18 or older in the United States had at least one major depressive episode in the past year. This number represented 6.7 percent of all U.S. adults. What's more, anxiety disorders are the most common mental illness in the United States, affecting 40 million adults in the aged 18 and older, or 18 percent of the population.

But many mental health experts are quick to point out that, while these numbers show the commonality of depression and other conditions, the way in which people experience symptoms is varied. Depression may not always be obvious to those around you, and we need to talk about the implications of this.



(Photo by Jemal Countess/Getty Images for BET)

Signs You May Be Dealing with High-Functioning Depression

So, how do you know if you or someone you know may be hiding behind high-functioning depression? Here are some signs that you may be dealing with it:

People tend to describe you as gloomy or a downer. It may be hard for you to see the bright side of any situation.

- Some may describe you as lazy because you find it difficult to muster the energy to accomplish basic tasks.

- It's hard for you to feel good about yourself, even when given a compliment. You may continuously look for ways to criticize yourself, either internally or outwardly to others.

- Your weight fluctuates without you being on a diet plan because your appetite grows or recedes depending on your mood.

- You may find yourself crying or experiencing feelings of hopelessness for seemingly no reason.

- Your performance may seem fine at school or work, but you're struggling to appear normal to peers.

- You find yourself tempted to use substances like drugs or alcohol to make yourself feel better.

If you are struggling with depression, or think you might be, please seek out a mental health counselor. And if someone tells you they are suffering from depression, regardless of their outside success, believe them. And assist them in finding the help they need.

If you or someone you know is considering suicide, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK. That's 1-800-273-8255. (BlackDoctor.org/ Christian Carter/Feb 7, 2022))

Blueberries: The Little Blue Belly Fat Fighter

NATIONWIDE -- Health experts have always raved about the health benefits of blueberries, but now, a new University of Michigan Cardiovascular Center study suggests that blueberries may help reduce belly fat and risk factors for heart disease and metabolic syndrome.

Blueberries are the fruits of a shrub that belong to the heath family, which includes the cranberry and bilberry as well as the azalea, mountain laurel and rhododendron.

Blueberries grow in clusters and range in size from that of a small pea to a marble. They are deep in color, ranging from blue to maroon to purple-black, and feature a white-gray waxy "bloom" that covers the surface serving as a protective coat. The skin surrounds a semi-transparent flesh that encases tiny seeds.

According to a study presented at the 2009 Experimental Biology conference in New Orleans, a diet rich in blueberries lowers blood cholesterol levels while improving glucose control and insulin sensitivity, lowering the risk of subsequent heart disease and diabetes.

Just some of the benefits of blueberries include:

They aid in reducing belly fat

A new University of Michigan Cardiovascular Center study suggests that blueberries may help reduce belly fat and risk factors for cardiovascular disease and metabolic syndrome. So far, we know that the fruit works on rats, which were the test subjects. A blueberry-enriched powder was mixed into the rats' diet, which was either

low-fat or high-fat rat chow. After 90 days, the rats with the blueberry-enriched diet had less abdominal fat, lower triglycerides, lower cholesterol and improved fasting glucose and insulin sensitivity.

They have the highest antioxidant capacity of all fresh fruit

Blueberries, being very rich in antioxidants like Anthocyanin, vitamin C, B complex, vitamin E, vitamin A, copper (a very effective immune builder and anti-bacterial), selenium, zinc, iron (promotes immunity by raising haemoglobin and oxygen concentration in blood), etc. boost up your immune system and prevent infections. Once your immunity is strong, you won't catch colds, fever, pox and all such nasty viral and bacterial communicable diseases.

They neutralize free radicals, which can affect disease and aging in the body

Blueberries bring you the brightest ray of hope, for they are laden with antioxidants and rank number 1 in the world of antioxidants. This is mainly due to the presence of Anthocyanin, a pigment responsible for the blue color of the blueberries. The abundance of vitamin C is also a big factor for this as well.

In addition, their health was even better when combined with the low-fat diet. That group had lower body weight, lower total fat mass and reduced liver mass than the rats on the high-fat diet. An enlarged liver is linked to obesity and insulin resistance, a hallmark of diabetes. Although more re-



search is needed to confirm these results in humans, a related study presented at the same conference showed that men with risk factors for heart disease who drank wild blueberry juice for three weeks seemed to experience slight improvements in glucose and insulin control.

They help promote urinary tract health

The building of colonies of certain bacteria like b-coli along the lining of the inner walls of the urinary tract is responsible for this infection, resulting in inflammation, burning sensation during in passage of urine and other complications. Here, Blue Berries can be surprisingly beneficial. It has a compound formed of big polymer like heavy molecules, which inhibits the growth of such bacteria. It also has some anti-biotic properties, which adds to this effect. These heavy and big molecules almost wash off these bacteria along the tract, thereby preventing the

infection.

Brain Health

The anthocyanin, the selenium, the vitamins A, B-complex, C and E, the zinc, sodium, potassium, copper, magnesium, phosphorus, manganese, etc., among others, can prevent and heal neurotic disorders by preventing degeneration and death of neurons, brain-cells and also by restoring the health of the central nervous system. It is hard to believe that these berries can also cure serious problems like Alzheimer's disease to a great extent. They even heal damaged brain cells and neuron tissues and keep your memory sharp for a long-long time. Researchers found that diets rich in blueberries significantly improved both the learning capacity and motor skills of aging animals, making them mentally equivalent to much younger ones. (BlackDoctor.org/ Part 1 of 2 (Read Conclusion in CNC week Feb 17, 2022))