

Depression stigma may be fading: survey

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In poll released to coincide with National Depression Screening Day, most said they would seek treatment if needed.

(HealthDay)—Most Americans know what depression is and believe there is no shame in seeking treatment for the mental health condition, a new survey shows.

The public opinion poll, released Thursday to coincide with National Depression Screening Day, also revealed that most Americans would not change their vote even if they learned that a [presidential candidate](#) had been treated for depression.

National Depression Screening Day, an annual event in which community organizations, colleges and military installations offer free, anonymous [mental health](#) screenings, is meant to inform Americans about the signs and [symptoms of depression](#) and suicide, and appropriate treatment options.

"These findings tell us that our efforts to reduce [stigma](#) and increase the public's knowledge of depression through events like National Depression Screening Day are having an effect," Dr. Douglas Jacobs, founder of the nonprofit Screening for Mental Health Inc., which conducted the poll, said in an organization news release.

"The goal of the program is to educate people on the symptoms of depression, assess their risk for mood and [anxiety disorders](#) and connect those in need with local treatment services," said Jacobs, an associate clinical professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School.

The telephone poll of 1,021 adults, conducted in September, found that 53 percent of Americans know someone who has been treated for depression and 72 percent said they would also seek treatment if they experienced symptoms of depression.

Of those who knew someone personally who was affected by depression, 76 percent said they would seek help if they too developed symptoms of the condition. In contrast, only 66 percent of those who didn't know anyone who was depressed would do the same.

The researchers also found that 67 percent of Americans believe [depression](#) is usually treatable.

More information: Find out where you can access free screenings [here](#).

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