**[Traumatic Life Events Are the Biggest Cause of Anxiety and Depression](http://blogs.psychcentral.com/nlp/2014/01/traumatic-life-events-are-the-biggest-cause-of-anxiety-and-depression/)**

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More than two thirds of all adults will experience at least one traumatic event in their lifetime.

It’s an event like this that may lead many to experience anxiety and depression. In fact, an [October 2013 study](http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2013/10/131016213223.htm) found that traumatic life events were the biggest determinant, beating out family history of mental health, income, education, relationship status and other social factors.

This study showed just how complex depression and anxiety are and how influential life events really were on the human psyche.

**Anxiety Hidden In Depression**

Anxiety is a feeling of worry or concern about an uncertain outcome. It can range from a mild feeling of uncertainty to severe, which is debilitating and hampers the ability to live life.

Anxiety can manifest in a variety of ways including irritability, fatigue, poor sleep, and inability to concentrate. Anxiety can be the [first sign of an anxiety disorder](http://www.webmd.com/depression/guide/link-to-other-mental-illnesses), some of which are obsessive-compulsive disorder, social anxiety disorder, or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Anxiety is the primary sign of an anxiety disorder but in depression, it can be an unseen accompaniment to a depressed mood.

The emotional symptoms of anxiety and depression are well known, but few recognize the physical symptoms as well.

**They can include:**

Headaches and muscle aches, which may seem worse than what you normally experience

Queasiness and Nausea resulting from digestive problems

Fatigue and Exhaustion that come from sleeping problems and can’t get better regardless of the amount of rest

Appetite and weight changes, which could result in lightheaded feelings

Some sufferers use a variety of means to deal with these symptoms. Some turn to substances, such as drugs or alcohol, others choose food, and some choose physical exercise. But despite all of these coping mechanisms, there could be a physiological reason for these symptoms.

**Possible Biological Link**

When looking for the exact mechanism that causes the stress of life events to lead to anxiety and depression, many scientists were looking at the [interaction between two receptors](http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2010/04/100411143348.htm): CRFR1 and 5-HTRs, the corticotrophin releasing factor receptor 1 (CRFR1) is responsible for the anxiety response to stress while specific types of serotonin receptors lead to depression.

The University of Western Ontario study showed that CRFR1 increased the number of 5-HTRs causing abnormal brain signaling.

Understanding the roles of these receptors means that doctors can engineer more effective treatments that block the path between them and treat both conditions better.

**Beyond Biology**

Of course, as researchers put the biological pieces together, it important to understand that psychotherapy, include specialty modalities like EMDR, are very effective treatments for the effects of physical and emotional trauma.