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RISK FACTORS FOR DEPRESSION IN YOUNG ADULTHOOD: PESSIMISM,
DYSFUNCTIONAL ATTITUDES AND NEUROTICISM

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Introduction: Major depression was the fourth most important determinant of the burden of human disease in 1990 and is expected to rank second in the world by 2020.

Objectives: As the causes of depression are complex, the identification of modifiable risk and protective factors, and understanding the processes through which they operate is crucial.

Aims: The main aim of the present study is to identify potential risk factors to the development of depression.

Methods: A total of 304 college students completed an on line questionnaire which assessed: depressive symptomatology (IACLIDE; Vaz Serra, 1994), pessimism (LOTR; Scheier, Carver, & Bridges, 1994), dysfunctional attitudes (DAS; Weissman & Beck, 1978) and neuroticism (EPQ; Eysenck & Eysenck, 1969).

Results: The main results indicated that pessimism, dysfunctional attitudes, and neuroticism correlated significantly and positively with depressive symptomatology.

Conclusions: The results suggested that pessimism, dysfunctional attitudes, and neuroticism can be considered risk factors for depression and important variables to be included in the depression prevention program under development. Overall, the results of this study indicate that understanding the relationships between these variables may be important to the prevention of depression.