Depression increases health care utilization and costs $17 billion in lost workdays each year.

Recognizing and diagnosing depression in patients in a primary care setting may be particularly challenging because patients, especially men, rarely spontaneously describe emotional difficulties.

Early identification and proper treatment significantly decrease the negative impact of depression in most patients.

Selected References
3. American Family Physician www.aafp.org/afp

For BHL Assessments, the Health Technicians can be reached toll free at:
(877) BHL FOR U — (877) 245-3678
Questions about the BHL can be answered by:
Jennifer Ross, BHL Coordinator:
(215) 823-5800 ext. 6140
David Oslin, MD, BHL Director: (215) 615-3083
The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommends screening adults for depression within Primary Care practices that have systems in place to assure accurate diagnosis, effective treatment, and follow-up.

The BHL will provide the primary care team with a comprehensive assessment.

The BHL addresses important diagnostic features such as identifying degree of impairment, and co-morbid psychiatric disorders.

The BHL identifies the need for further follow-ups and issues that can be discussed at the next primary care visit.

Assessment by the BHL will also allow rapid triage for those who do need referral to the Behavioral Health Clinic.

The BHL encourages clinicians to utilize the BHL for monitoring of care.

Clinicians can request follow-up evaluations at specified intervals of care or request a packet of monitoring for patients in whom treatment was recently initiated.

The depression monitoring package consists of regularly scheduled follow-up assessments for up to 3 months monitoring side effects, symptoms and adherence to treatment.

At each time point, a report is generated to the clinician with specific recommendations.