person may develop depression if he or she undergoes certain traumatic life experiences such as parental abuse, parental discord, lack of social support etc. A person with a certain biochemical predisposition may also become vulnerable to depression. Women tend to suffer from it more than men and it is common across all cultures and races irrespective of geographic location."

Depression occurs in two forms—Unipolar and Bipolar. Dr Rahman says, "Unipolar is more common and it is not genetic. Bipolar is being hyper or manic. The prevalence of bi polar is quite high. It is bined with medicine is the most effective way for managing depression.

In Bangladesh, the number of mental health professionals is very low compared to the demand. "There are only around 200 psychiatrists and 40 clinical psychologists most of whom work in Dhaka. Professional training in Psychiatry for medical graduates is offered only in BSMMU while professional training in Clinical Psychology is only offered at the Department of Clinical Psychology in the University of Dhaka," says professor Chowdhury.



a serious illness. Often it is too late when it is diagnosed. Bipolar is almost certainly genetic. However, latest medicines are available in Bangladesh and they are cheaper and more affordable here than in other countries."

The two mainstream methods of treatment are medical and psychological. Psychiatrists are trained to do both while psychologists do counselling or therapy. Therapy enables and empowers the person to better manage his or her difficulties including depression, anxiety disorders, eating disorders, and substance abuse, among others. A therapist works with the patient to identify problems and solve them. Research shows that therapy com-

Although one in every six persons in the country has some form of depression, there is very little awareness about this mental illness. It is often seen as a character flaw by friends and family. Most men often do not seek treatment in fear of being stigmatised by the society. Women are more conscious. A lot of young people suffer from societal and mental pressure. In some cases, it turns into depression. Young people who feel depressed sometimes get addicted to drugs to feel good for the time being, but it makes their case worse. Dr Rahman believes that counselling can play a huge role at the university level.

"Maternal depression is quite significant in