

This quiz could help you battle the blues

By JACK ALEXANDER

Millions of Americans sink into the depths of despair each year because they find they can't cope with stress and personal setbacks in life.

Dangerous depression can range from an occasional bout with the blues to a disabling psychological illness.

To learn how much you

know about depression and perhaps pick up a tip or two on how to combat it, answer these statements true or false and

then check the correct answers.

1. Most forms of depression are easy to recognize.
2. Your diet can affect your moods.
3. Depression is psychological and can't be detected.
4. No one ever dies of love-

sickness, no matter how heart-broken they were over their last romance.

5. You can inherit a depression tendency from parents.
6. Depression is more common in men than women.
7. Alcohol lifts your mood.
8. Exercise, as healthful as it

is, doesn't affect depression.

The answers:

1. False. Most everyone can spot depression (crying spells, poor appetite), but milder forms of the blues are much harder to recognize. Depression has been called the great masquerader for its symptoms appear in the guise of many other disturbances such as indigestion and fatigue.

2. True. Poor diet, particularly one of junk foods, like candy, colas and popcorn, can trigger depressed moods. Also excess sugar in the bloodstream often leads to mood swings and inner tension.

3. False. Blood tests often show changes in hormonal levels.

4. False. Emotional reactions to love loss can be quite disabling. Clinical depression of this type in some cases can be life-threatening. Typical victims are women, although men also suffer from it.

5. False. Although we inherit biological predispositions that involve hormones and enzymes in the brain, the major part of our reaction is based on how we perceive our situation and this determines just how we will feel about it.

6. False. Probably because of a more complex endocrine system, twice as many women as men suffer from melancholy.

7. False. Alcohol is a central nervous system depressant.

8. True. Exercise does re-