



Are you feeling very sad, tired, helpless, and/or hopeless most of the time? Are you losing interest in enjoyable activities, such as time with your family, friends, or hobbies? Have you been having difficulty working, sleeping, eating, and functioning over the last two weeks?

If so, you may have depression. Talk to your doctor and/or mental health professional about it.



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## WHAT IS DEPRESSION?

Everyone feels sad or blue once in a while, but when those sad feelings don't seem to go away or keep coming back, it could be depression. Depression is a common but serious problem that can affect a person's daily life. The good news is that most people who experience depression get better with treatment.

## WHAT ARE THE SIGNS OF DEPRESSION?

People can experience depression in different ways. Some of the most common signs of depression include the following:

### FEELINGS

- Sadness
- Hopelessness/feeling like nothing good is ever going to happen
- Guilt
- Moodiness
- Anger
- Loss of interest in friends, family, and other favorite activities

### THOUGHTS

- Trouble concentrating
- Trouble making decisions
- Trouble remembering things
- Thoughts about death/dying

### BEHAVIORS

- Staying away from people
- Using substances, like alcohol, to feel better
- Missing work, school, or other commitments

### PHYSICAL PROBLEMS

- Tiredness or lack of energy
- Aches and pains with no reason
- Changes in appetite
- Weight loss
- Weight gain
- Changes in sleep – sleeping too little or too much

## WHAT CAUSES PEOPLE TO FEEL DEPRESSED?

There is no single known cause of depression. It is believed that a combination of things play a role in depression, for example, genetics, changes in hormones or in other chemicals in the body, or stress and other problems. The following things can increase the chances of depression:

- Someone in your family having depression
- Toxic stress (e.g. stress over which you do not have control; domestic violence, or experiencing past or present abuse or loss of a loved one)
- Health problems
- Having little or no support from close friends or family

## HOW IS DEPRESSION TREATED?

Depression can be treated. The first step is to talk with a doctor or mental health professional. Your primary care doctor can treat depression or can refer you to a mental health professional. The most common types of treatment include:

### Counseling or Therapy

Therapy helps by teaching new ways of thinking and behaving and changing habits that may be contributing to depression.

### Medication

When depression starts to impact your ability to function, medication may be helpful.

### Social support

Build a strong support system of family and friends

### Lifestyle changes

Exercise regularly, eat healthy, get enough rest and sleep, avoid drugs or alcohol

## WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP MYSELF IF I HAVE DEPRESSION?



Talk to your doctor or a mental health professional.



Be social: Spend time with other people and talk to a friend or family about your feelings.



Exercise: Walking, jogging, dancing, etc.



Eat healthy: Eat balanced meals that include fruits and vegetables. Avoid alcohol (drinking can make the symptoms worse).



Join a support group: Spending time with other people with similar experiences like you may help reduce feelings of being alone.