



Depression

Sometimes people are not just stressed out but feel “down” or depressed most of the time. Depression can make it hard to work, sleep, eat, and enjoy pleasant activities.

Who gets depressed?

No one really knows why some people get depressed and others do not. Women are more likely than men to say that they are depressed. For some people, life changes and stressful events can bring on depression.

Stressful events can include:

- Loss of a spouse, family member, or close friend
- Relationship difficulties or breakups
- Caring for aging parents
- Single parenthood
- Financial problems or unemployment
- Chronic health problems

How will I know if I am depressed?

Depression can affect your feelings and thoughts, your energy and focus, and even your body. Some of the signs of depression are the same as signs of stress. But if you are depressed, you probably will have several different signs or symptoms that affect you **nearly every day and for most of the day.**

Signs of Depression.

Feelings and Thoughts

- Low, sad, miserable
- Anxious, lots of worrying
- Withdrawn, quiet, alone
- Feelings of loss
- Afraid
- Crying easily
- Helpless
- Obsessed with the past
- Agitated, tense, irritable
- Angry, hateful
- Feeling guilty
- Self-critical
- Low self-esteem
- Feeling worthless, like a failure
- Hopeless
- Feeling dead or empty inside
- Hating life, hoping or planning to die

Lack of Energy and Focus

- Fatigue
- Heaviness
- Hard to concentrate
- Disorganized
- No motivation
- Listless

Physical Signs

- No appetite
- Can't stop eating
- Can't sleep
- Early waking
- Oversleeping
- Body aches

Where can I get help?

If you think you are depressed, getting help is important! See your doctor and tell him or her about your feelings or signs of depression. Symptoms might be caused by a medical problem (such as thyroid issues). They may also be a normal response to a major loss.

If you do not have a doctor, check the Yellow Pages under "physicians," "hospitals," "mental health," "social services," "hotlines," or "crisis intervention services."

What else can I do to help with depression?

- Set **realistic goals**.
- Do what you can as you can. Break large tasks into small ones and **set priorities**.
- Try to be with **other people**.
- Talk to someone.
- Let your **family and friends** help you.
- **Participate** in activities that make you feel better (such as exercise, movies, ballgames, church, and social activities).
- Don't make important decisions **until your depression has lifted**.
- You probably won't "snap out of" a depression right away. But, with time and help, you can feel a little better day by day.

Remember, feeling better takes time!