

Depression: what you should know

If you think you, or someone you know, might be suffering from depression, read on.

What is depression?

- Depression is an illness characterized by persistent sadness and a loss of interest in activities that you normally enjoy, accompanied by an inability to carry out daily activities, for at least two weeks.
- In addition, people with depression normally have several of the following: a loss of energy; a change in appetite; sleeping more or less; anxiety; reduced concentration; indecisiveness; restlessness; feelings of worthlessness, guilt, or hopelessness; and thoughts of self-harm or suicide.
- Something that can happen to anybody.
- Not a sign or weakness.
- Treatable, with talking therapies or antidepressant medication or a combination of these.



REMEMBER:
Depression can
be treated. If you
think you have
depression,
seek help.

What you can do if you think you are depressed

- Talk to someone you trust about your feelings. Most people feel better after talking to someone who cares about them.
- Seek professional help. Your local health-care worker or doctor is a good place to start.
- Remember that with the right help, you can get better.
- Keep up with activities that you used to enjoy when you were well.
- Stay connected. Keep in contact with family and friends.
- Exercise regularly, even if it's just a short walk.
- Stick to regular eating and sleeping habits.
- Accept that you might have depression and adjust your expectations. You may not be able to accomplish as much as you do usually.
- Avoid or restrict alcohol intake and refrain from using illicit drugs; they can worsen depression.
- If you feel suicidal, contact someone for help immediately.