

Warning Signs of Depression

Depression can be a result of physical, genetic and psychological causes. Women are twice as likely as men to suffer the devastating effects of depression. Occasional blues or down times are a normal part of your life. Extended bouts of depression are debilitating and destructive. Depression can be a symptom of Parkinson's disease, stroke, arthritis, thyroid problems and cancer. It can also be a side effect of some prescription drugs and can be in response to a devastating event such as the death of a loved one or divorce. Sometimes symptoms are not always clear or obvious. Look for the warning signs.

WARNING SIGNS OF DEPRESSION

- Loss of interest in home and work
- Frequent crying
- Change in eating or sleeping habits
- Unexplained grouchiness or nervousness
- Poor self-image
- Inability to express feelings
- Loss of pleasure
- Indecisiveness
- Poor concentration or forgetfulness
- Social isolation
- Increased physical problems
- Feelings of guilt
- Suicidal thoughts

TYPES OF DEPRESSION AND WHAT YOU CAN DO TO OVERCOME THEM TRANSITIONAL DEPRESSION

Temporary sadness as a reaction to death, divorce or other major life change is normal and expected. Time and patience are necessary to get through these feelings. Spend time with friends or family who can be supportive of your emotional needs. Feelings of depression may go on for more than a few weeks or interfere with your home or work life. If this is the case, it might be time to seek some professional help. Ask your doctor for a checkup and a referral to an appropriate healthcare provider.

MODERATE DEPRESSION

Moderately depressed people often feel that their lives are shaky at best. Many moderately depressed people describe their lives as being as unstable as a house of cards. They can hold a job, but feel unsatisfied. It's also difficult for them to enjoy family and friends. If you're feeling moderately depressed, explore self-help skills and seek professional help.

SEVERE DEPRESSION

Severely depressed people can't enjoy the people around them and have lost the will to seek pleasure in life. Too often they have even lost the will to live. Depressed people see their lives as frustrating, their pasts as wasted and their futures as futile. They often view themselves as losers. The risk of suicide is high for severely depressed people. If you or a loved one experiences any of these feelings on a regular basis or have suicidal thoughts, seek professional help immediately.

GET THE HELP YOU NEED

Depression and other mental health conditions have long carried social stigmas. The truth is, getting help for depression is as necessary as getting help for a heart condition or a vision problem. If you're experiencing even a few of the warning signs, you need to get help. Psychotherapy (talk therapy) and psychopharmacology (drug therapy) are the two types of treatment commonly used to treat depression.