

# Depression

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## What is depression?

Depression is a disorder that causes someone to feel sad or unhappy over a long period of time. These emotions are more intense than general feelings of sadness we all feel sometimes. Depression is a medical problem just like diabetes or heart disease. There are many different causes for depression and it is very treatable.

## Depression is bad for your health

Depression affects you and those around you. It can lead to poor health or even suicide.

Studies show people with depression may also suffer from other health problems. Depression can make these problems worse. Some medical problems can make depression worse. A person with depression may need help from an expert. Without help problems can get worse.

Signs of a possible problem:

- Not sleeping or sleeping too much
- Restlessness
- Unable to focus or make decisions
- Feeling down all the time
- Feelings of worthlessness
- Fatigue or loss of energy every day
- Not eating or eating too much
- Loss of interest in favorite activities
- Thoughts of suicide



## Who offers depression services?

**Your Doctor:** They can treat you or refer you to an expert.

**Psychiatrist:** They are medical doctors who can give medicine.

**Nurse Practitioner:** They are nurses with medical certification who can be experts in behavioral health and can give medication in most states. They can legally prescribe medication in most states.

**Therapist:** Can provide psychotherapy, but cannot prescribe medicine. Some types of therapists are Licensed Mental Health Counselors (LMCH), and Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists (LMFT).

**Psychologist:** Are therapists than can provide psychotherapy and/or mental health testing, but cannot prescribe medicine.

## Depression can be treated

Up to 80% of people treated for depression start to feel better. Most people see relief within four to six weeks of treatment. Treatment can include medicine, therapy, support groups or a combination of treatments.\*

## What to expect at your first appointment

Your provider will want to get to know you and what problems you want to work on. They may ask you about your background and want help in finding your strengths and skills. Providers are bound by strict rules to keep your information private. What you tell your provider helps them to create the right treatment plan for you.

## Your role in treatment

A treatment plan is made by you and your provider and may include:

- Medicine
- Individual or family therapy
- Support from friends, family and peers
- Talking with other providers

## Ways to help yourself feel better:

- Talk to and join in with friends, family, and peers
- Get moving! Exercise is great for your health
- Get involved. Volunteer, pick a fun hobby, or join a group
- Avoid drugs and alcohol
- Plan to deal with stress before it happens
- Set realistic goals for yourself

## Feeling better

The key person in recovery is YOU. You and your provider should make a treatment plan based on your goals for your health.

Help your provider by:

- Talking about your feelings and progress. Tell them as much as you can.
- Writing down how the medication makes you feel.

This will help you both make better choices about your treatment. If you're ever unhappy with your treatment plan, your provider or results, call us. We can help find you a new provider to work with if needed.

## Resources

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### **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline**

1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255)

### **National Alliance for Mental Illness**

[www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org); 1-800-950-6264

### **National Institute of Mental Health**

[www.nimh.nih.gov](http://www.nimh.nih.gov)

### **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)**

[www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov](http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov)



1-800-704-1484

TDD/TTY 1-800-255-0056

**PSHP.com**