

Depression

Depression is more than a sad mood. It lasts for weeks (Major Depressive Episode) or months (Persistent Depression). People with depression may find it hard to enjoy the things they used to like, and have inconsistent sleeping, eating, or concentration. They may have low energy or be easily irritated. People with depression may feel hopeless and have thoughts of death.

Where does depression come from?

Depression is rare in children, but becomes more frequent through adolescence. About 11% of adolescents may meet criteria for depression in their lifetime.

It's about twice as common in females than in males.

Depression runs in families. Stressful or traumatic events can contribute to a person developing depression.

How can my parents help me?

Listening and learning: They can listen carefully without judgment and offer support and encouragement. They can learn from professionals about how to treat depression.

Treatment: They can help me get to a doctor or mental health professional.

Patience: They can be patient. Depression is treatable and will get better.

Safety: Parents should never ignore comments about safety or suicide. Parents should discuss concerns about suicidal thoughts with health providers.

Scan for additional information about depression:



How can I help myself?

Learn:  Know you're not alone. Learn about what depression is and how to help yourself.

Move!  Try scheduling activities that you previously enjoyed, like meeting with friends. Physical activity is one of the best things you can do to fight depression. Start with little goals, like walking outside for 10 minutes a day. It's harder to get started if you set goals too high.

Reframe your brain.  Depression makes you focus on the negative. You don't have to believe your depressed thoughts. Identify positive things and people in your life. Be patient with yourself and be kind to yourself.

Sleep well!  Set up a regular sleep schedule. Don't nap in the daytime.

Reach Out:  Depression can make you feel isolated. Stay connected with family and friends who bring up your mood.

How can a professional help?

Depression is treatable. Treatment involves psychotherapy, medication, or both.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) or Interpersonal Therapy (IPT) can help you change the thoughts and actions that relate to depression.

Medications, like Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors (SSRIs), can be prescribed to treat depression. These medications start working in about 4-6 weeks, and people typically take them for about a year.