



Understanding the facts about depression and finding support

More than one in every 20 adults in the U.S. suffers from depression each year.¹ Feelings of ongoing sadness and a loss of interest in the things you once enjoyed are potential symptoms of depression. Unlike normal sadness or grief, depression won't go away on its own. Without help it can have a serious impact on your overall health. The good news is there is a lot of help and support for people suffering with depression.



What are some causes of depression?²

Stress and depression often go together. Facing life challenges like losing a job, money problems, the end of a relationship, or the loss of a loved one can all trigger depression. Even positive changes in your life – like a new baby or work promotion – can cause stress that could lead to depression. If you have a close family member with depression, it might increase your risk. Depression can sometimes be a symptom of another illness, so it's important you talk to your doctor to rule out any other health issues.



How do I know if I'm depressed?

Although depression may occur only once during your life, you could be depressed if you experience all or some of these feelings nearly every day.³

- Sadness, anxiety, emptiness, or hopelessness
- Anxiety, frustration, restlessness, or irritability
- Loss of interest in favorite activities
- Problems concentrating, remembering, or making decisions
- Trouble sleeping, waking too early, or oversleeping
- Eating too much or not wanting to eat at all
- Unexplained health concerns like headaches, stomach issues, or chronic pain
- Recurrent thoughts of death or suicide



What are some ways I can begin to overcome depression?

It's okay to ask for help. Reach out to a trusted friend or a family member and ask for support. While depression may make you feel like isolating from others, being with friends and loved ones can actually help you feel better. Also, remember that depression is not something you can just “get over,” so it's important to talk to your doctor and get professional help if you need it.

Be patient with yourself and set realistic goals. Break big tasks into smaller ones so you'll feel less overwhelmed. If you have any big decisions to make, first talk about them with the people who know you well and can help you think clearly. Remember to take it one day at a time and realize that with time and treatment, you can feel like yourself again.



How can I help someone with depression?

You can start by helping them seek treatment. A friend or loved one who is depressed often feels too overwhelmed to ask for help. And remember to be patient – those struggling with depression are not trying to get attention – they are in real pain. Your support can have a positive effect on their road to feeling better. Here are some other ways you can help:

- Offer your support and listen carefully to your friend or loved one.
- Schedule appointments for them or remind them to take their medication on time.
- Try to get them interested in the activities they used to enjoy.

Visit [anthem.com](https://www.anthem.com) for more ways to get healthy – and stay healthy.

If you or someone needs help now, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at **988** or **800-273-8255 (TALK)** or call **911** right away.⁴

¹ National Institute of Mental Health, Major Depression Among Adults (accessed December 2016): <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics/prevalence/major-depression-among-adults.shtml>

² WebMD, Common Causes of Depression (accessed December 2016): <http://www.webmd.com/depression/common-causes>

³ Center for Disease Control, Mental Illness: Depression (accessed December 2016): <http://www.cdc.gov/mentalhealth/basics/mental-illness/depression.htm>

⁴ Mayo Clinic, Depression: Supporting a family member or friend (accessed December 2016): <http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/depression/in-depth/depression/art-20045943>