

## Symptoms of Depression

- Feelings of extreme sadness or despair for at least two weeks or longer
- Persistent sad, anxious, or "empty" mood
- Feelings of hopelessness, pessimism
- Increased use of drug and or alcohol
- Social withdrawal, isolation
- Major change in self esteem, deterioration in hygiene habits
- Feelings of guilt, self-condemnation
- Anger, worthlessness, helplessness
- Loss of interest or pleasure in hobbies and activities that were once enjoyed, including sex
- Decreased energy, fatigue, being "slowed down"
- Difficulty concentrating, remembering, making simple decisions
- Insomnia, early-morning awakening, or oversleeping
- Appetite and/or weight loss or overeating and weight gain, not medication related
- Thoughts of death or suicide, talk of harming self or others, suicide attempts
- Restlessness, irritability

## FACTS ABOUT DEPRESSION:

1. Depressed individuals tend to feel helpless and hopeless and to blame themselves for having these feelings. This cycle often interferes with asking for help.
2. There are many forms of depression. Some people experience a few symptoms, some many. Severity of symptoms varies with individuals and also varies over time.
3. People who are depressed may become overwhelmed and exhausted and stop participating in certain everyday activities altogether. They may withdraw from family and friends and have difficulty with routine activities.
4. Having one episode of depression greatly increases the risk of having another episode. Some research indicates that ongoing psychotherapy may lessen the chance of future episodes or reduce their intensity.
5. Research has shown that the combination of psychotherapy and antidepressant medication reduces quality-of- life-impairing problems of depression.
6. **Chronically ill patients are at higher risk for depressive reactions to medications, hence it is important that they report changes in mood to their physicians.**
7. Talking about feeling suicidal needs to be taken seriously.

**Note:** Depression can be a side-effect of certain medications, be sure to let your physicians know if you have significant mood changes.

## **Depression resources:**

National Suicide Crisis Hotline: 1 (800) SUICIDE

NIMH information on depression:

[www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/depression/index.shtml](http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/depression/index.shtml)

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