

DEPRESSION SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS AND WHAT TO DO

DEPRESSION

What is Depression? It's not just feeling sad, and it's not a passing mood. It may not even make sense, because life may be good -- but it is real, it is not uncommon, and it calls for attention.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS (Depression is diagnosable when someone exhibits 5 or more of these symptoms for 2 weeks or longer)

- Irritable mood
- Inability to focus
- Inability to make decisions
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, or hopelessness
- Changes in diet, weight, or sleeping habits
- Loss of interests in activities that are usually enjoyed
- Isolation from family and friends
- Lack of energy
- Increased use of drugs and alcohol
- Suicidal thoughts

If you recognize these symptoms in *yourself*, please know that you are not alone, and that there are people who want to help you feel better. (See reverse for resources.)

If you recognize these symptoms in a friend or relative, here are some things you can do:

- Understand that Depression is a real and treatable medical condition.
- Support the person and be there for them.
- Listen to them.
- Give advice when necessary.
- If they display warning signs of suicide, encourage them to seek help or tell someone who can get them help (SEE REVERSE).

DO SAY:

- "I'm here for you."
- "You're not alone in this."
- "You matter."
- "You are important to me."
- "I won't assume I can understand what you're feeling, but I'll do my best to offer compassion."
- "Can I help you find a professional to talk to?"
- "This feeling won't last forever, even if it doesn't seem that way right now."
- "This is not your fault."
- "What can I do for you?"

DON'T SAY:

- "No one ever said that life was fair."
- "There's always someone worse off than you are."
- "Stop feeling sorry for yourself."
- "It's your own fault."
- "It's all in your head."
- "Snap out of it."
- "Things aren't that bad."
- "Count your blessings."
- "You don't look depressed."
- "Just get over it."
- "You don't like feeling that way? So change it."

(Sources and suggested reading on reverse side.)

No Shame On U

Mental Shift. End Stigma. Save Lives.



NoShameOnU.org
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SUICIDE WARNING SIGNS (24/7 National Suicide Prevention Hotline: 1-800-273-8255)

- Thoughts of death and suicide
- Looking for ways to end one's life
- Isolation from family and friends
- Increased use of drugs and alcohol
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, or hopelessness
- Talk of death and suicide
- Saying goodbyes to loved ones
- Giving away valued possessions
- Changes in sleeping patterns
- Moods such as anger, irritability, or depression

WHAT TO DO

- Talk to them directly and ask if they have ever felt like harming themselves or dying.
- Motivate them to call the suicide prevention line.
- Encourage them to seek professional help.
- Talk to someone who may help them get help.

EMERGENCIES - If there is an attempt

- **Call 911**
- **Contact their family and/or friends**

SOURCES & RECOMMENDED READING

"Helping Someone with Depression: Supporting a Depressed Loved One While Taking Care of Yourself." *Depression in Older Adults: Recognizing the Signs of Elderly Depression and Getting Treatment*, www.helpguide.org/articles/depression/helping-someone-with-depression.htm

"What Is Major Depression? The Signs, Symptoms & Treatment." *PsyCom.net - Mental Health Treatment Resource Since 1986*, www.psycom.net/depression.central.major.html

"Depression." *National Institute of Mental Health*, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/depression/index.shtml

"We Can All Prevent Suicide." *Lifeline*, suicidepreventionlifeline.org/how-we-can-all-prevent-suicide/

"Risk Factors and Warning Signs." *AFSP*, afsp.org/about-suicide/risk-factors-and-warning-signs/

"Suicide: What to Do When Someone Is Suicidal." *Mayo Clinic*, Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research, 31 Jan. 2018, www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/suicide/in-depth/suicide/art-20044707

"Creating A Safer Today for our Youth." *Elyssa's Mission*, <http://elyssasmission.org/suicide-prevention/>

Health.com - <http://www.health.com/health/gallery/0,,20393228,00.html>

Buzzfeed - <https://www.buzzfeed.com/mirandalarbi/things-to-do-when-supporting-someone-struggling-with-depr>

Huffington Post - https://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/09/11/supportive-depression-what-to-say_n_5760916.html

PsychCentral - <https://psychcentral.com/lib/worst-things-to-say-to-someone-whos-depressed/>

Reader's Digest - <https://www.rd.com/health/wellness/things-to-never-say-to-someone-with-depression/>