



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 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>



Support for your mental health

Learn how you can take care of your mental health and well-being. You'll find information and resources at [anthem.com/blog](https://www.anthem.com/blog).

Protect your mental health and well-being

Mental health is as important as physical health when caring for your overall well-being. Your mental health determines how you think, feel, and act – and it affects your physical health, too. The following information and resources can help you understand common mental health topics and learn ways to protect your overall well-being:



Stress: When demands on our time, energy, and resources challenge us, we experience stress. Discover effective ways to lower stress and generate positive thoughts and feelings. Long-term stress can damage your health, so watch for warning signs and manage your response to stressful situations before you feel overwhelmed.



Managing emotions: Expressing your emotions effectively is important to your health and well-being. Pent-up emotions can be harmful to your mind, body, and relationships with others. Learn how to talk about your feelings with a trusted confidante so you can work through them and focus on your positive emotions.



Sleep: When you sleep, your mind and body are hard at work on your overall health. Sleep builds up your immune system and strengthens your mind. Learn about health habits to help you sleep better, and set aside enough time for quality rest. It can make a huge difference in your mental and physical health.



Anxiety: Experiencing anxiety once in a while is normal, and different people have different ways of managing it. Uncontrolled anxiety can be a burden that affects your work and relationships. Severe and constant anxiety may cause medical problems or make them worse, but there are effective ways to control your anxiety and protect your mental health.



Suicide: Intervention and support are key to suicide prevention. If you know someone who is thinking of harming themselves, take the threat of suicide seriously. Call a doctor or suicide line, or take the person to an ER. Contact the confidential and free National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, 24/7: **800-273-TALK (8255)**. Find out what else you can do to help prevent suicide.



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