

# Depression

## Learn the Signs and Types of Treatment

If you're in the hospital or have a chronic condition, you may feel sad or angry for a little while. This is a normal—but sometimes the feeling doesn't go away. If your feelings are ongoing and interfere with your daily life, you may have depression.

Having depression can be harmful to your healing process—it can make recovery harder, hospital stays longer and readmissions more frequent. Talking to your doctor about depression could help your healing process stay on track.

### Symptoms of Depression

There are many signs of depression, and they can be different for everyone. Possible signs include:

- ◆ feeling sad or empty
- ◆ low energy or motivation
- ◆ loss of interest in family, friends or hobbies
- ◆ eating or sleeping too much or too little
- ◆ feeling guilty, worthless or hopeless
- ◆ problems with memory or attention
- ◆ headaches or other pains with no known cause
- ◆ abusing substances like drugs, alcohol or tobacco
- ◆ thoughts of death or suicide
- ◆ feeling irritable, angry, agitated or restless (more common in men)

Remember—depression is treatable, and you're not alone. If you have any of these symptoms, talk to your doctor as soon as possible.

### Depression Is Treatable

Treating depression is different for everyone. Your doctor may recommend medicine, talk therapy or a combination of both. Antidepressant medicines work to balance chemicals in your brain that control mood. Talk therapy provides treatment through conversation and problem-solving with a therapist.

Finding a good treatment can take time. Keep working with your doctor after you go home to find what best manages your depression.

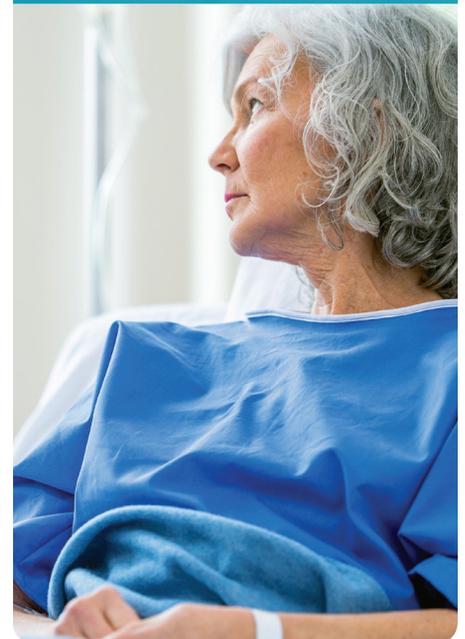
### Beyond Treatment: What You Can Do

In addition to treatment, try these tips:

- ◆ **Exercise most days of the week.** Physical activity creates mood-lifting chemicals called endorphins. Schedule workouts with an exercise buddy.
- ◆ **Think about what you eat and drink.** Eat protein with sugary foods—this helps even out your energy levels. And avoid alcohol until your depression improves.
- ◆ **Spend time with people.** Plan activities or meals with a family member or friend. And open up to loved ones about your depression.
- ◆ **Postpone important decisions, like getting married or changing jobs.** Stress can make depression worse. Focus on feeling better before making a life-changing decision.

### Depression in Older Adults

Some causes of depression, like chronic conditions and major life changes, are more likely to affect older people. But depression is not just a normal part of aging—and you don't have to cope with it alone. Treatments can help you feel better. Share all your feelings and symptoms with your doctor.



### Ask for Help

Depression happens for different reasons, including family history of depression, major life changes, trauma, having a chronic condition or medicine side effects. If you are thinking about suicide or worried about a loved one, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255.