

Depression

GETTING HELP



where can you get **help?**

There is help for someone who has depression. Even in hard cases, depression is very treatable. The first step is to visit a doctor. Your family doctor or a health clinic is a good place to start. A doctor can make sure that the signs of depression are not being caused by another health condition. A doctor may suggest that you see a mental health professional.

The most common treatments for depression are therapy and medication. Several types of therapy or "talk therapy" can help people with depression.

It is important to be aware that there are many medications for depression, that different medications work for different people, and that it takes four to eight weeks for the medication to work. Tell your doctor right away if you have any side effects or if you feel that the medication is not working. Your doctor may change your medication.

In Crisis?

- If you are thinking about hurting yourself, or know someone who is, tell someone who can help right away
- Call your doctor
- Call 911 or go to the hospital emergency room as soon as possible, help or ask a friend or family member to help you do these things
- Call the toll-free, 24 hour hotline 1.800.273.TALK (1.800.273.8255) to talk to a counselor
- Make sure you or the suicidal person is not left alone

Call the Behavioral Health Services directly at 1.877.221.9295.

Getting better can, will, and DOES happen.

How can I help myself if I am depressed?

You may feel tired, weak, and like there is no hope. It may be hard to do something to help yourself. But it is important to see that these feelings are part of the depression and do not look at how you actually feel about something. As you understand your depression, and begin treatment, negative thinking will fade. In the meantime:

- Do mild activity or exercise. Go to a movie, a ballgame or another event or activity that you once enjoyed. Join in religious, social, or other activities.
- Break up large chores into small ones, decide what is important and do what you can as you can.
- Try to spend time with other people and talk to a trusted friend or relative. Try not to spend too much time alone, and let others help you.

Information source: nimh.nih.gov

- Set goals you can hit for yourself.
- Expect your mood to get better a little at a time. During treatment for depression, sleep and whether you feel hungry or not, will begin to get better before your depressed mood lifts.
- Put off important decisions, such as getting married or divorced or changing jobs, until you feel better.
- Be confident that positive thinking will take the place of negative thoughts as your depression gets better with treatment.

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How can I help a friend or relative who is depressed?

If you know someone who has depression, the first and most important thing you can do is to help him/her get the right opinion and treatment. You may need to make an appointment for him/her and go with him/her to see the doctor. Urge him/her to stay in treatment, or to try a different treatment if no improvement is seen after six to eight weeks.

Also, you can:

- Offer emotional support, understanding, patience and encouragement; listen carefully.
- Never make the feeling that he/she shows seem small, but point out how things really are and offer hope.

- Never ignore comments about suicide, and make sure you are telling them to your friend's or relative's therapist or doctor
- Invite your friend out for walks, outings and other activities. Keep trying if he/she says no, but don't push him/her to take on too much too soon. Even though doing something fun and company are needed, too much of that may increase feelings of not being good enough.
- Remind him/her that with time and help, the depression will get better.

