



## Depression treatment options and goals



# Depression can be treated

Depression is a common and serious condition. It is not simply a case of sadness that goes away after a while. With depression, you may feel angry or sad most of the time. This can make it difficult to do normal, everyday things.

If your healthcare provider tells you that you have depression, think of it as the first step to recovery. Ask what having depression means for your life and what you can expect from treatment. You may need to see more than one person for treatment. This could be a therapist for talk therapy and a medical doctor to prescribe medicine.



**Most people can feel better when they get the care they need.**

The right treatment at the right time can stop your depression from getting worse. That's why it's important to get help as soon as you notice symptoms of depression.



## Treatment may take time

Treatment for depression can be effective, but it might not always work as quickly as you want. It's important not to give up hope. If you stick with your care plan, you may start feeling like yourself.

**Talk with your healthcare provider about how you're feeling now and about how you expect to feel when you begin treatment.**

The right treatment may help you get back to the life you enjoyed before you had depression.

# What are some treatment options?

The most common treatments for depression are talk therapy and medicine. **For most people, a combination of these two options works best.**



## Talk therapy



## Medicines

Talk therapy can be an effective treatment for many people with depression. With talk therapy, you speak with a mental health counselor about your thoughts, feelings, and mood.

**It can help you set personal goals, including:**

- Finding healthy ways to deal with stress.
- Figuring out your “triggers,” the people or events that make you feel worse.
- Having better relationships with friends and family members.
- Setting up a routine that you feel comfortable with.

Depression is often treated with medicines called antidepressants. Medicines affect people in different ways. **Here are a few things you should know about antidepressants:**

- It can take as long as 8–12 weeks for some antidepressants to work.
- You might need to try a few different medicines before you find what works best for you.
- You may need to add another medicine to the one you’re currently taking.
- Keep track of which medicines you have tried and tell your healthcare provider how you felt when taking them.

There are many options for treating depression. Most people see the best results with medicine and talk therapy in their treatment plan. **Having a pet — especially a dog — has been shown to help,** as well. Talk to your doctor about what may be best for your needs.



## Keep taking your medicine until your healthcare provider says it's okay to stop



Stopping a medicine before your healthcare provider tells you to can make your depression worse. It can also cause side effects.

If you don't feel better as soon as your healthcare provider expects you to, he or she might need to change the amount of medicine you take, add an extra medicine, or switch to a different medicine.

### You shouldn't change the amount of medicine you take or stop taking your medicine, even:

#### ▶ **If you start to feel better**

That can mean that the medicine is working. If you stop taking it, the depression could return.

#### ▶ **If you have side effects**

Talk with your healthcare provider. Some side effects may start to go away as your body gets used to the new medicine.

#### ▶ **If you think medicine isn't working**

Many medicines can take as long as 8–12 weeks before they work their best.





# Starting a new medicine

If your healthcare provider suggests medicine for your depression, ask questions about the benefits, risks, and side effects.

Use the mood tracker below to see how you're doing with your new medicine. Each square represents one day.

## Name of medicine

Example: ABC Medicine

## How did I feel today?



Month 1

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat

Month 2

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat

Tear off and share with your healthcare provider.



## Additional resources

Check out these organizations for more information about depression or how to find help:

### **Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance**

[dbsalliance.org](http://dbsalliance.org) | 1-800-826-3632

### **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline**

[suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://suicidepreventionlifeline.org)  
1-800-273-8255

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Visit [lillyforbetterhealth.com](http://lillyforbetterhealth.com) for more information about depression.

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