

# Depression

Learn the facts: Depression is a common, real and treatable condition.

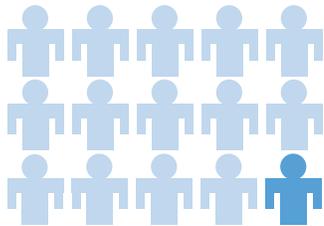
## Understanding depression

Depression is a common and treatable condition. It is a brain condition that leaves a person sad. It is different than normal sadness. Depression can make it hard to work, concentrate or do everyday tasks.

Depression can affect anyone, regardless of age, gender or health situation. It can affect people of any race or ethnic group. It is never a normal part of life.

## Depression is very common

In 2014, 6.7 percent of all U.S. adults had at least one major depressive episode in the past year. This translates to approximately one out of 15 adults.



## What causes depression?

Depression is a condition of the brain, but its exact causes are not always clear. Current understanding is that people inherit both vulnerability and resilience to depression through genetics.

Life's stresses can create changes in the brain chemistry and structure. These changes can lead to many symptoms of depression.

Other contributing factors can include hormone changes, grief, sleep disturbance, medication, substance use, or other medical conditions.

It is common to experience anxiety and depression. About half of those diagnosed with depression are also diagnosed with an anxiety disorder. Most people with depression experience some anxiety symptoms.

## What are the symptoms of depression?

People with depression feel down most of the time for periods lasting at least two weeks. They also have at least one of these symptoms:

1. No longer enjoy or care about doing the things they used to like to do
2. Feel sad, down, hopeless or cranky most of the day, almost every day

## Depression can also make people:

- Lose or gain weight
- Sleep too much or too little
- Feel tired or have no energy
- Feel guilty or worthless
- Forget things or feel confused
- Think about death or suicide

*(continued)*



**SWEDISH**  
MEDICAL GROUP

Extraordinary **care**. Extraordinary **caring**.<sup>SM</sup>

## Warning signs of suicide

Seek help if you or someone you know is:

- Threatening to hurt or kill oneself
- Looking for ways to hurt oneself such as seeking firearms
- Having feelings of hopelessness or uncontrolled anger
- Acting recklessly or engaging in risky behavior
- Increasing alcohol or drug use
- Withdrawing from friends or family
- Experiencing dramatic mood changes
- Seeing no reason to stay alive

### Help is available.

- Call your health care provider and tell them it is urgent
- Call **9-1-1**
- Go to the emergency room at your local hospital
- Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline **800-273-TALK (8255)**
- Call the 24-hour Crisis Line **866-427-4747**

Call for help!



For more details, visit the **American Psychiatric Association** at **Psychiatry.org/depression**

## Treatment options

Safe and effective treatments for depression are available. They include seeing a psychotherapist, taking medications or a combination of both.

**Psychotherapy:** Psychotherapy helps people learn skills and make lifestyle changes that can treat depression. Research shows that people often make big improvements in depression after just two or three therapy visits, though therapy sometimes continues longer than that.

**Medications:** Medications are useful for reducing symptoms of depression. The benefits of medications can be felt as early as the first or second week of treatment. Medications can cause side effects that most likely go away over time. Successful treatment may require dosage adjustments and regular monitoring by a health care provider.

## Depression in special populations

Teenagers, older adults, and postpartum women might be at a higher risk for depression. Whether symptoms are mild, moderate or severe, recovery is possible with proper treatment.

**Talk to your health care provider about possible treatment options.**

## Tips to help yourself

- **Exercise** – It's a great way to lift your mood and take care of your body. Brisk walking, running, cycling or doing upper or lower body weight lifting three to five times per week for 45-60 minutes helps fight depression.
- **Eat right** – A balanced and healthy diet that includes fruits, vegetables, whole grains and lean meats will help keep your body healthy.
- **Avoid drugs and alcohol** – They may worsen symptoms of depression. They may also interfere with your treatment.
- **Be with others** – The support of family and friends is important for recovery. Talking openly with people you trust helps.



**SWEDISH**  
MEDICAL GROUP

1-800-SWEDISH (1-800-793-3474)  
Swedish.org