

# DEPRESSION

## What is depression:

Depression is a common and serious medical condition. Sadness is one of the symptoms of depression, but with depression you have more than just sadness.

Many children have times when they are sad or down. Occasional sadness is a normal part of growing up. However, if children are sad, irritable, or no longer enjoy things, and this occurs day after day, it may be a sign that they are suffering from major depressive disorder, commonly known as depression. Some people think that only adults become depressed. In fact, children and adolescents can experience depression, and studies show that it is on the rise. More than one in seven teens experience depression each year.

## Depression symptoms can vary from mild to severe and can include:

- Feeling sad or having a depressed mood
- Loss of interest or pleasure in activities once enjoyed
- Changes in appetite – weight loss or gain unrelated to dieting
- Trouble sleeping or sleeping too much
- Loss of energy or increased fatigue
- Increase in purposeless physical activity (e.g., hand-wringing or pacing) or slowed movements and speech (actions observable by others)
- Feeling worthless or guilty
- Difficulty thinking, concentrating or making decisions
- Thoughts of death or suicide
- For a medical diagnosis, symptoms must last at least two weeks

## Depression warning signs

- Expressing a negative or hopeless outlook
- Losing interest in things they used to enjoy
- Changes in sleep or eating habits (sleeping or eating too much or too little)
- Sharing feelings of shame, guilt, or worthlessness
- Talking about death or suicide

## Don't ignore the signs – even if you're not sure

Sometimes there really are no signs that someone is depressed. But if you think someone you care about might be struggling, [talk to them](#) about it now. Even if it's just a gut feeling, or a small sign that something isn't right, it's a conversation that's worth having.

By having the courage to speak up, we can help people find support and get better. And, in the most extreme cases, [help people at risk for suicide stay alive](#).

## Online Resources

There are numerous resources online about depression and they can help you recognize the symptoms, find the words to talk about what you or a loved one may be feeling, and offer some tools to help cope. It's important to take depression seriously and to be alert to the need to get professional help, especially if there is any concern that the depressed person may harm themselves.

A straightforward explanation of depression and its symptoms: What is Depression: <https://www.psychiatry.org/patients-families/depression/what-is-depression>

Depression can be difficult to recognize – and hard to talk about. One of the challenges in dealing with depression is how hard it can be to find words to talk about what you are feeling. Here's a helpful resource to learn about depression in yourself or others and to find support: Depression Doesn't Always Look Like Depression: <https://findyourwords.org>

Understanding depression in children and teens:

Children's Depression Checklist <http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/conditions/childrens-depression-checklist>

Facts for Families: The Depressed Child

[https://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families\\_and\\_Youth/Facts\\_for\\_Families/FFF-Guide/The-Depressed-Child-004.aspx](https://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families_and_Youth/Facts_for_Families/FFF-Guide/The-Depressed-Child-004.aspx)

Teen Depression:

<http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/conditions/depression-teens>

How to Recognize Depression in Teens

<https://www.everydayhealth.com/depression/how-to-recognize-depression-in-teens.aspx>

How to Help Your Depressed Teen <https://childmind.org/article/how-to-help-your-depressed-teenager/>

From the NIH: [https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/teen-depression/teendepression-508\\_150205.pdf](https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/teen-depression/teendepression-508_150205.pdf)

Everyday Health: <https://www.everydayhealth.com/depression/how-to-recognize-depression-in-teens.aspx>

Mayo Clinic: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/teen-depression/symptoms-causes/syc-20350985>

Are you the Parent of a Depressed Child or Teenager

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/call/201706/are-you-the-parent-depressed-child-or-teenager>

When a Parent is Depressed:

How Depression Affects Your Family <https://www.parents.com/baby/health/postpartum-depression/how-depression-affects-your-family/>

When A Parent Is Depressed...what kids want to know <https://www.camh.ca/en/health-info/guides-and-publications/when-a-parent-is-depressed>

Depressed Parent, Depressed Child?

[https://www.health.harvard.edu/newsletter\\_article/depressed-parent-depressed-child](https://www.health.harvard.edu/newsletter_article/depressed-parent-depressed-child)

This Way Up: An Australian website with mental health information and online resources for understanding and coping with emotions. <https://thiswayup.org.au/>

How Do You Feel: I Feel Sad: <https://thiswayup.org.au/how-do-you-feel/sad/>

### **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline**

We can all help prevent suicide. The Lifeline provides 24/7, free and confidential support for people in distress, prevention and crisis resources for you or your loved ones, and best practices for professionals.

[1-800-273-8255](tel:1-800-273-8255)

<https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>

Click here to link to additional suicide prevention resources.