

DEPRESSION

DEP RES SION

Depression is a mood disorder that causes a persistent feeling of sadness and loss of interest. You may have trouble doing normal day-to-day activities, and sometimes feel as if life isn't worth living. It is also called major depressive disorder or clinical depression. It affects how you feel, think and behave, and can lead to a variety of emotional and physical problems.



SYMPTOMS

- Feelings of sadness, emptiness or hopelessness.
- Angry outbursts, irritability or frustration, even over small matters.
- Loss of interest or pleasure in most or all normal activities, such as sex, hobbies or sports.
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- Tiredness and lack of energy, where even small tasks take extra effort to accomplish.
- Reduced appetite and weight loss or increased cravings for food and weight gain.
- Anxiety, agitation or restlessness.
- Slowed thinking, speaking or body movements.
- Feelings of worthlessness or guilt, fixating on past failures or self-blame.
- Trouble thinking, concentrating, making decisions and remembering things.
- Frequent or recurrent thoughts of death, suicidal thoughts, suicide attempts or suicide



RISK FAC TORS

- Certain personality traits e.g. low self-esteem, pessimism
- Trauma e.g. physical or sexual abuse, the death or loss of a loved one, a difficult relationship, or financial problems
- Family history of depression, bipolar disorder, alcoholism
- History of anxiety disorder, eating disorders or post-traumatic stress disorder
- Abuse of alcohol or other drugs
- Illness e.g. cancer, stroke or heart disease
- Certain medications e.g. high blood pressure medications or sleeping pills

Causes

- **Biological differences:** People with depression appear to have physical changes in their brains.
- **Brain chemistry:** Effect of neurotransmitters and how they interact with neurocircuits involved in maintaining mood stability.
- **Hormones:** Changes in hormonal balance e.g. in pregnancy and during the weeks or months after delivery (postpartum), and from thyroid problems, or in menopause
- **Inherited traits:** Depression is more common in people whose blood relatives also have this condition



Management of Depression

- Certain personality traits e.g. low self-esteem, pessimism
- Support, ranging from discussing practical solutions and contributing stressors, to educating family members
- Family history of depression, bipolar disorder, alcoholism
- Psychotherapy, also known as talking therapies, such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)
- Drug treatment regimen, specifically antidepressants