

What is Depression?



Depression is common but can be a serious illness! Of course we all feel sad or blah some times, but these feelings are usually temporary and go away after a while. When you have depression, it affects your daily life and affects those around you. Most likely, depression is caused by a combination of genetic, biological, environmental and psychological factors. Depression is a brain disorder!

Did you know there are several types of depression? Let's get educated!

- 1) Major Depression (effects your daily living - sleeping, eating, daily life and it comes and go's)
- 2) Persistent Depressive Disorder (depression lasting at least 2 years)
- 3) Psychotic Depression (severe depression with a form of psychosis or delusions)
- 4) Postpartum Depression ("baby-blues" after child birth due to hormonal changes)
- 5) Seasonal Affective Disorder (onset of depression during winter months due to less natural sunlight)
- 6) Bipolar Disorder (manic-depressive illness or mood swings)

Each individual may experience different symptoms and severity depending on his or her particular illness. Diagnosis is very important! See your doctor or a mental health specialist and seek treatment early for best result.

Quick facts:

- Depression is more common among women than men.
- Men may be more likely than women to turn to alcohol when they are depressed.
- Depression is not a normal part of aging.
- Sometimes it can be difficult to distinguish grief from depression. Grief is a natural process.
- Before puberty, boys and girls are equally likely to develop depression. By age 15, however, girls are twice as likely as boys to have had a major depressive episode.

Final thought: Depression is a serious mental illness; it is not something that you have made up in your head. Do not be ashamed to seek out help!

If you are thinking about harming yourself or attempting suicide, tell someone who can help right away:

- Call your doctor's office or call 911 for emergency services.
- Go to the nearest hospital emergency room.
- Call the toll-free, 24-hour hotline of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at **1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255)** to be connected to a trained counselor at a suicide crisis center nearest you.