

What is Depression?



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HOW OFTEN HAVE YOU HEARD YOURSELF SAY, “I’M FEELING a little depressed today.” Don’t be alarmed; it is quite normal to have a bad day and feel a little blue because of it. These experiences are very different from what mental health professionals refer to as “clinical depression.”

So how do you know the difference? If you’re feeling a little blue after getting home from a long day during which you were late for work and received a speech from your boss on the importance of being on time; received a call from your child’s teacher about “little Johnny’s attention problem;” or had your car break down on your way home and couldn’t pay the tow truck driver because you were overdrawn at the bank, chances are you are suffering from normal feelings of depression and will cheer up in a little while. However, there are other, more serious, types of depression that require clinical attention.

Symptoms of Depression:

- Sad, anxious or “empty” moods that last longer than a few weeks.
- Feelings of hopelessness
- Loss of pleasure in hobbies, family or work
- Problems with sleep
- Recurring aches and pains
- Loss of appetite or overeating
- Loss of energy, always feeling tired or slowed down
- Thoughts of death or suicide (these should always be taken seriously)

Depression can be treated with counseling and/or medications.

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