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How Do I Know if I Am Experiencing Depression?

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Find out if what you are experiencing may be depression. Depression is treatable. Learn about seeking treatment for yourself or a loved one. The following questions may help you determine if you are experiencing depression.

During the past two weeks, how often have you been bothered by any of the problems listed below?

Little interest or pleasure in doing things?

Not at all.

Several days.

More than half the days.

Nearly every day.

Feeling down, depressed, or hopeless?

Not at all.

Several days.

More than half the days.

Nearly every day.

If you answered “more than half the days” or “nearly every day” to either question, you may be depressed and should seek help from your health care provider. Your provider can help figure out whether you have depression, and he or she can help find the best treatment for you. Depression can be treated with counseling, medications, or both.

If you or someone you know is in crisis, tell someone who can help immediately.

- **Call 911** or go to the nearest hospital emergency department for emergency medical treatment.
- **Call or text 988, or chat at 988lifeline.org.** 988 is confidential, free, and available 24/7/365, connecting those experiencing a mental health, substance use, or suicidal crisis with trained crisis counselors.
- **[National Maternal Mental Health Hotline](#)** 24/7, Free, Confidential Hotline for Pregnant and New Moms in English and Spanish
Call or text 1-833-9-HELP4MOMS (1-833-943-5746).
- **Don't** be alone.
- **Don't** leave another person alone if he or she is in crisis.

Talking to Your Health Care Provider



If you think you may be depressed, the first step to seeking treatment is to talk to your health care provider. Remember that depression is **not your fault**. By asking for support, you are helping yourself and your family. Use a checklist to help you and your provider talk about your experiences.

Ways to begin the conversation include: *"I read this information, and it sounds like how I feel. Can you help me find out if I have depression?" "I don't feel like myself. Could it be depression?"*

In response, your health care provider should:

- Carefully review your completed checklist.
- Ask several more questions about how you are feeling and acting.
- Talk with you about treatment options.
- Provide the name and number of a mental health specialist for you to visit. You can also visit CDC's [Resources](#) to find help in your area.

After your visit, make sure to follow-up on all referrals and treatment that he or she suggests.

Medications

When discussing medications with your provider, let him or her know if you are pregnant, thinking about becoming pregnant, or breastfeeding. You and your provider can decide if taking medications while pregnant or breastfeeding is right for you. Visit [Medications and Pregnancy](#) for more information.

How to Help a Friend or Family Member Experiencing Depression

To support someone who has depression, help her get an appropriate diagnosis and treatment. You may need to make an appointment and go with her to see her health care provider. To learn more about supporting a friend or family member with depression, see [How Can I Help a Loved One Who Is Depressed?](#) For information about helping a friend or loved one in crisis, see the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline's [Help for Someone Else](#).

Also, remember that if you know someone who is depressed, it may affect you too, and it is important to take care of yourself as well. For additional resources on depression or postpartum depression, see [Resources](#).

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