

**Seek Professional Help**  
Well-meaning friends or family members may try to tell someone with depression to “snap out of it,” “just be positive,” or “you can be happier if you just try harder.” But depression is not a sign of weakness or a character flaw. Most people with depression need treatment to get better.



## What Is Depression?

*Depression is a common but serious mood disorder. It causes severe symptoms that affect how you feel, think, and handle daily activities, such as sleeping, eating, or working. To be diagnosed with depression, the symptoms must be present for at least two weeks.*

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**SEWA-AIFW**

**24/7 CRISIS LINE**

**952.912.9100**

Talk It Out: Mental Health Consults  
**[counseling@sewa-aifw.org](mailto:counseling@sewa-aifw.org)**

6645 James Ave N  
Brooklyn Center, MN 55430  
763.234.8301 | [sewa-aifw.org](http://sewa-aifw.org)



**@sewaaifwmn**

National Suicide Prevention Hotline  
1-800-273-8255

Content Modified from [www.nimh.nih.gov](http://www.nimh.nih.gov)

# Depression

Help is Available



SEWA-AIFW

**mn** DEPARTMENT  
OF HEALTH

# Signs & Symptoms

If you have been experiencing some of the following signs and symptoms most of the day, nearly every day, for at least two weeks, you may be suffering from depression:

- Persistent sad, anxious, or “empty” mood
- Feelings of hopelessness, or pessimism
- Irritability
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, or helplessness
- Loss of interest or pleasure in hobbies and activities
- Decreased energy or fatigue
- Moving or talking more slowly
- Feeling restless or having trouble sitting still
- Difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions
- Difficulty sleeping, early-morning awakening, or oversleeping
- Appetite and/or weight changes
- Thoughts of death or suicide, or suicide attempts
- Aches or pains, headaches, cramps, or digestive problems without a clear physical cause and/or that do not ease even with treatment

# Managing Depression

## Treatment

Treatment may include medications, psychotherapy, or a combination of the two. If these treatments do not reduce symptoms, electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) and other brain stimulation therapies may be options to explore.

## Be Realistic

Set realistic and achievable goals so you don't get discouraged. Learn to say no.

## Keep Good Company

Spend time with other people and confide in a trusted friend or relative.

## Ask For Help

Try not to isolate yourself, and let others help you.

## Exercise & Healthy Habits

Physical activity gives you an outlet and endorphins to help relax you.

## Practice Relaxation Skills

Deep-breaths , meditation, visualization, listening to music, journaling, doing yoga.

## Postpone Important Decisions

Leave decisions, such as getting married or divorced, or changing jobs until a time you feel better. Discuss decisions with others who know you well and have a more objective view of your situation.

## Accept that Change is Slow

Expect your mood to improve gradually, not immediately.

# Risk Factors

Depression is caused by a combination of genetic, biological, environmental, & psychological factors. Depression can happen at any age, often begins in adulthood, but is now recognized as occurring in children & teens. Depression, especially in older adults, can co-occur with other serious medical illnesses and conditions are often worse when depression is present.

## Risk Factors Include:

- Personal or family history of depression
- Major life changes, trauma, or stress
- Certain physical illnesses and medications

## **STAY CONNECTED**

**It always helps to talk with someone who cares about you and your health.**

- **Friends and Family**
- **Coworkers**
- **Counselors**
- **Support /Community Groups**