

When Professional Help Is Indicated

Since depression is a potentially fatal illness due to suicide, it is very important to seek professional help as early as possible. If a person experiences a depressed or sad mood or a significantly diminished loss of interest or pleasure many activities most of the day or nearly every day for more than two weeks, it is important to contact either a medical or mental health provider.

Depression is a treatable illness. Many people suffer needlessly when help is available. With treatment, some people no longer experience symptoms. Others may still experience symptoms, however they are more manageable.

The goal of all treatment is to increase a person's life functioning.

Types of Treatment

- Medication
- Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy
- A combination of medication and cognitive-behavioral therapy
- Electroconvulsive Therapy (ECT)
- Transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS)
- Complementary and Alternative Therapies
 - Diet
 - Exercise
 - Meditation
 - Massage Therapy



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To find information online,
scan the QR code below or
visit this webpage:

www.sunshineclinic.org/behavioral-health/self-harm/



Sources:

- <http://www.webmd.com/depression/default.htm>
- <http://www.apa.org/topics/topicdepress.html>

Cutting or Self Harm

Learn:

- What it is and the types of self harm
- Symptoms of depression and suicide
- When you need professional help
- Types of treatment



What is Self-Harm?

Self-harm is purposeful injury to the body to provide relief from emotional pain. While it may occasionally result in death, the underlying reasons for self-harming and suicidal behavior are typically significantly different. It is a person's unhealthy attempt to cope with difficult emotions such as rejection, anger, and loss.

Self-harm is associated with a number of mental health disorders including depression, anxiety, PTSD, eating disorders and various personality disorders. It is most often an impulsive action that can temporarily relieve the emotional pain, but create shame and guilt and an exacerbation of the pain that was being numbed.

Types of Depression

There are a number of different types of depression. They vary in the severity of the symptoms, the impact on a person's life, and the particular brain chemistry imbalance.

- Chronic Depression (Dysthymic Disorder)
- Major Depression (Clinical Depression)
- Bipolar Disorder (Manic Depressive Disorder)
- Seasonal Depression (Seasonal Affective Disorder—SAD)
- Postpartum Depression (PPD)
- Psychotic Depression

Symptoms of Depression

Emotional / Feeling & Cognitive / Thinking

- Difficulty with concentration, memory, and decision-making
- Fatigue and decreased energy
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, and/or helplessness
- Feelings of hopelessness and/or pessimism
- Irritability, restlessness, increased anger
- Loss of interest in activities or hobbies once pleasurable, including sex
- Persistent sad, anxious, or "empty" feelings
- Thoughts of suicide, suicide attempts

Physical

- Headaches
- Back pain
- Muscle aches and joint pain
- Chest pain
- Digestive problems
- Exhaustion and fatigue
- Sleeping problems
- Change in appetite or weight
- Dizziness or lightheadedness

Adolescent Depression

Depression in young people is different than typical mood changes. Kids who are depressed tend to be more irritable or angry and often show their symptoms by behavior rather than feelings. In addition they show many of the same symptoms listed above for adults.

Suicide

Depression carries a high risk of suicide. Anybody who expresses suicidal thoughts or intentions should be taken very seriously. Help should be gotten immediately whether or not the person who is expressing thoughts of suicide wants help.

Warning signs of suicide with depression include:

- A sudden switch from being very sad to being very calm or appearing to be happy
- Always talking or thinking about death
- Clinical depression that gets worse
- Tempting fate by taking risks that could lead to death, like driving through red lights
- Losing interest in things one used to care about
- Making comments about being hopeless, helpless, or worthless
- Putting affairs in order, tying up loose ends, changing a will
- Saying things like "It would be better if I wasn't here" or "I want out"
- Talking about suicide (killing one's self)
Visiting or calling people one cares about

Some people who are in immediate danger of hurting themselves reach out for help and would like to be stopped; others truly want to die in that moment and will resist efforts to help. Frequently the suicidal person will need to be hospitalized to keep him/her safe. The earlier the signs of suicide are recognized, the more likely the suicidal person is to accept the help that is offered.