Depression is a medical illness. Early treatment is best. Difficulty sleeping, early-morning awakening, or oversleeping. Decreased energy, fatigue, being “slowed down.” Depression can be treated. Difficulty concentrating, remembering, making decisions. Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, helplessness. Persistent sad, anxious, or “empty” mood. Feelings of hopelessness, pessimism. Thoughts of death or suicide; suicide attempts. Appetite and/or unwanted weight changes. Loss of interest or pleasure in hobbies and activities. Restlessness, irritability. Persistent physical symptoms, such as muscle pain or headaches.

Most colleges offer free or low-cost mental health services to students. For more information about these and other types of depression at http://www.nimh.nih.gov/

NIMH sometimes hosts live Twitter chats and other social media events on various mental health issues. For more information about past and upcoming events, visit the NIMH website (http://www.nimh.nih.gov).

You can also call to seek help as soon as possible by calling the Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255). If you know someone who is considering suicide, do not leave him or her alone. Try to get your friend or loved one to seek more help from his or her doctor, campus security, the student health service, or the nearest hospital emergency room, to call 911, or try to get him or her to a hospital emergency room, or call 911. Remove any access to firearms or other potential tools for suicide, including medications. You can also call for help as soon as possible by calling the Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255).

A: You can find more information about depression and other mental health issues at http://www.nimh.nih.gov

Q: Where can I learn more about depression and other mental health issues?

A: The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) website (http://www.nimh.nih.gov) provides information about various mental health disorders and mental health issues. On the website, you can also learn about the latest mental health research and news. The website is mobile-friendly. This means you can access the NIMH website anywhere, anytime, and on any device—from desktop computers to tablets and mobile phones.

You can also follow NIMH on Twitter (@NIMHgov). You can also follow NIMH on Facebook, LinkedIn, and YouTube.

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Q: What are the signs and symptoms of depression?

A: Yes. The most common depressive disorders include major depressive disorder (the most common, often different from a person’s usual emotional and functioning), persistent depressive disorder (also known as chronic, low-grade depression that stay get better or worse over time), and psychotic depression (the most severe, with delusions or hallucinations). Some people may also be at risk for depression in the winter ("seasonal affective disorder"), and some women report depression in the two weeks or two prior to their menstrual period ("premenstrual dysphoric disorder"). You can learn about these and other types of depression at http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/depression/index.shtml

Q: Are there different types of depression?

A: Yes. The most common depressive disorders include major depressive disorder (the most common, often different from a person’s usual emotional and functioning), persistent depressive disorder (also known as chronic, low-grade depression that stay get better or worse over time), and psychotic depression (the most severe, with delusions or hallucinations). Some people may also be at risk for depression in the winter ("seasonal affective disorder"), and some women report depression in the two weeks or two prior to their menstrual period ("premenstrual dysphoric disorder"). You can learn about these and other types of depression at http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/depression/index.shtml

A: Depression is a medical illness with many symptoms, including physical ones. Depression is only a small part of depression. Some people with depression may not feel sad or depressed all, but be more irritable, or just lose interest in activities they usually enjoy. Depression interferes with your daily life and normal function. Don't ignore or try to hide the symptoms. It is not a character flaw, and you can’t walk it away.

Q: What is depression?

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Q: What are “co-occurring” disorders?
A: Depression can occur at the same time as other health problems, such as anxiety or substance use disorder. If you also have to deal with other medical conditions, such as diabetes or thyroid imbalance. Certain medications, for example, may cause side effects that contribute to depression, although some women are very sensitive to hormonal changes. Modern birth control pills are not associated with an increased risk of depression.

Q: If I think I may have depression, where can I get help?
A: If you have symptoms of depression that are getting in the way of your activities and enjoyment, it’s important to get care. Depression can be treated, and you can get better with care and treatment. Don’t wait for depression to go away by itself or think you can manage it on your own, and don’t ignore how you’re feeling or what it might mean. It’s possible that you’re busy—but you need to make time to get help. If you don’t talk for help, depression may get worse and contribute to other health problems, while robbing you of the ability to function with your studies and your social life.

Q: If depression is causing me problems, what can I do?
A: It can also lead to “self-medication” with high-risk behaviors with their own side effects. Even if you don’t think you have another health problem that is causing your depression, you may get worse and contribute to other health problems, while robbing you of the ability to function with your studies and your social life.

Q: What is talk therapy?
A: There are different types of talk therapy or psychotherapy that can help you feel better. Research has shown that certain types of talk therapy or psychotherapy can help you feel better if you have depression.

Q: What medications treat depression?
A: If your doctor thinks you need medication to help your depression, he or she may prescribe an antidepressant. If your doctor thinks you need medication to help your depression, he or she may prescribe an antidepressant.

Q: How is depression treated?
A: Effective treatments for depression include talk therapy (also called psychotherapy), personalized for your situation, or a combination of talk therapy and medication. Early treatment is best.

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Q: What else can I do?
A: Besides seeing a doctor and a counselor, you can also help your depression by being patient with yourself and good to yourself. Don’t expect to get better immediately. It’s important to be realistic about how you’re doing and what you’re capable of. Always ask for help when you need it, even if it’s just a friend or family member. Many also offer workshops and outreach programs to support you.


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