

How can I help a loved one who is depressed?

If you know someone who has depression, first help him or her see a doctor or mental health professional.

- Offer support, understanding, patience, and encouragement.
- Talk to him or her, and listen carefully.
- Never ignore comments about suicide, and report them to your loved one's therapist or doctor.
- Invite him or her out for walks, outings, and other activities.
- Remind him or her that with time and treatment, the depression will lift.

How can I help myself if I am depressed?

As you continue treatment, gradually you will start to feel better. Remember that if you are taking an antidepressant, it may take several weeks for it to start working. Try to do things that you used to enjoy before you had depression. Go easy on yourself. Other things that may help include:

- Breaking up large tasks into small ones, and doing what you can as you can. Try not to do too many things at once.
- Spending time with other people and talking to a friend or relative about your feelings.
- Once you have a treatment plan, try to stick to it. It will take time for treatment to work.
- Do not make important life decisions until you feel better. Discuss decisions with others who know you well.

Where can I go for help?

If you are unsure where to go for help, ask your family doctor. You can also check the phone book or online for mental health professionals, contact your local mental health association, or check with your insurance carrier to find someone who participates in your plan. Hospital doctors can help in an emergency.

If you or someone you know is in crisis, get help quickly.

- Call your doctor.
- Call 911 for emergency services.
- Go to the nearest hospital emergency room.
- Call the toll-free, 24-hour hotline of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255); TTY: 1-800-799-4TTY (4889).

For more information on conditions that affect mental health, resources, and research, go to **MentalHealth.gov** at <http://www.mentalhealth.gov>, the **NIMH website** at <http://www.nimh.nih.gov>, or contact us at:

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depression

Do you feel very tired, helpless,
and hopeless? Are you sad most
of the time and take no pleasure
in your family, friends, or hobbies?
Are you having trouble working,
sleeping, eating, and functioning?
Have you felt this way for a
long time?

If so, you may have depression.