

Symptoms of depression



What the fact sheet covers:

- Distinguishing depression from an occasional 'down' mood
- Symptoms of depression
- When to seek help for depression
- Where to get more information.

Distinguishing depression from an occasional 'down' mood

Depression is a common experience, with one in seven Australians experiencing depression in their lifetime. We all face periods of feeling low and a bit depressed; experiences such as having a bad day at work or hearing some bad news can impact on our mood. Sometimes we might even feel sad for no reason at all.

In most cases, people 'bounce back'; however, people with clinical depression struggle to pick themselves up when feeling down. If symptoms of depression are severe, last for two weeks or more, and affect your functioning at home or at work, you should see a health professional.

Symptoms of depression include:

- Feeling bad about yourself

- Changes in sleep patterns
- Changes in appetite or weight
- Feeling overwhelmed by pessimism, anger, guilt, irritability and anxiety
- Varying emotions throughout the day – for example, feeling worse in the morning and better as the day progresses
- Reduced or lack of enjoyment of previously enjoyed activities
- Reduced interest in sex
- Reduced pain tolerance
- Poor concentration and memory
- Low motivation to do things that used to matter to you
- Feeling exhausted.



When to seek help for depression

If symptoms of depression are severe, last for two weeks or more, and affect your functioning at home or at work, you may need to see a health professional. Having one or two symptoms by themselves is unlikely to indicate depression. However, there could be physical causes for your symptoms which may warrant medical assessment.

If you are feeling suicidal, contact Lifeline's 24-hour crisis support service on [13 11 14](tel:131114) or seek immediate help from a GP, psychiatrist or psychologist.

Key points to remember

- Occasionally feeling depressed or down is a common experience.
- Professional healthcare advice should be sought if feelings of depression are severe, last for two weeks or more, and day-to-day functioning is impaired.
- **If you're feeling suicidal, seek immediate help** by calling one of the helplines below or speaking to your GP, psychologist or psychiatrist.

Where to get more information

Additional resources & support

For more mental health resources and support tools that are research-informed and recommended by professionals visit: www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/resources-support/

- Depression self-test
- Causes
- Types
- Treatments
- Seeking help.

Depression fact sheets

www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/resources-support/fact-sheets/

Find a range of fact sheets, including:

- Causes of depression
- Depression in adolescents
- Depression in older people
- Managing depression with exercise.

Helplines:

Lifeline: 13 11 14

www.lifeline.org.au

24-hour Australian crisis counselling service

Suicide Call Back Service: 1300 659 467

www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au

24-hour Australian counselling service

beyondblue: 1300 22 4636

www.beyondblue.org.au

24-hour phone support and online chat service and links to resources and apps

Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800

www.kidshelpline.com.au

Free confidential 24-hour counselling for young people aged 5 to 18

QLife (3pm - midnight): 1800 184 527

www.qlife.org.au

National counselling and referral service for people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and/or intersex.



For more information

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