

DEPRESSION

What is depression?

Depression is an illness that affects your thoughts, feelings, behavior, and physical health. It is an “empty” or “sad” feeling that will not go away after a few hours or days. Things you might normally deal with at work and home can be hard for you to handle.

Causes of depression

- changes in the chemicals in your brain;
- having difficult and painful times in your life;
- some medicines;
- chronic illness;
- shorter days in fall and winter months;
- after pregnancy;
- depression may run in families.

Symptoms of Depression

- feeling sad, empty or anxious all the time;
- feeling tired, restless and irritable;
- crying more than usual;
- feeling worthless, helpless, hopeless or guilty;
- not enjoying daily activities;
- having trouble sleeping or getting up in the morning;
- eating too much or too little;

- multiple body aches and pains can be a sign of depression;
- having a hard time paying attention;
- thinking about hurting yourself or others.

If you have had these symptoms for more than two weeks, you may have depression. Please ask for help from your doctor or PCP.

How is depression treated?

Your doctor will work with you to find the best treatment for your problem. Treatments can include: medicine, therapy (talking with a counselor), or both. You may need to be on treatment for several weeks or months. You may need to stay in the hospital if you have severe depression or feel like hurting yourself or others.

- Depression is a common medical problem, just like diabetes or high blood pressure.
- Getting treatment for depression is not a sign of weakness.
- With treatment, you can get better and take care of yourself and your family.
- *Tell your doctor and pharmacist about all other medicines you are taking including herbal remedies.*
- *Avoid alcohol and illegal drugs as they may cause problems with your treatment. They can make depression worse.*

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Where To Get Help

- Suicide & Crisis Service
1-408-279-3312 or
1-408-683-2482
- Santa Clara County Mental Health
Department
1-800-704-0900

For appointments or questions, call Valley Connection at 1-888-334-1000. In an emergency, call 911.