

## Know the Signs and Symptoms of Depression

Everyone feels down at times. The blues are a natural part of life. But an unhappy period that's intense or lasts for more than a couple of weeks can be a sign of **depression**. Depression is a serious illness. It can disrupt the lives of family and friends. If you know someone you think may be depressed, find out what you can do to help.

### Recognizing Signs of Depression

People who are depressed may:

- Feel unhappy, sad, blue, down, or miserable nearly every day.
- Feel helpless, hopeless, or worthless.
- Lose interest in hobbies, friends, and activities that used to give pleasure.
- Not sleep well or sleep too much.
- Gain or lose weight.
- Feel low on energy or constantly tired.
- Have a hard time concentrating or making decisions.
- Lose interest in sex.
- Have physical symptoms, such as stomachaches, headaches, or backaches.



### Know the Serious Signals

Warning signals for suicide include:

- Threats or talk of suicide.
- Statements such as "I won't be a problem much longer" or "Nothing matters."
- Giving away possessions or making a will or funeral arrangements.
- Buying a gun or other weapon.
- Sudden, unexplained cheerfulness or calm after a period of depression.

If you notice any of these signs, get help right away. Call a healthcare professional, mental health clinic, or suicide hotline and ask what action to take. In an emergency, don't hesitate to call the police.

#### Resources:

- **National Institutes of Mental Health**  
866-615-6464  
[www.nimh.nih.gov](http://www.nimh.nih.gov)
- **National Alliance on Mental Illness**  
800-950-6264  
[www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org)
- **Mental Health America**  
800-969-6643  
[www.nmha.org](http://www.nmha.org)
- **National Suicide Hotline**  
800-784-2433 (800-SUICIDE)