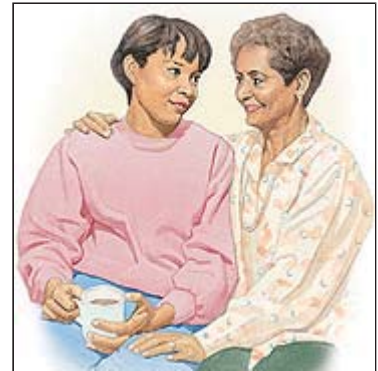


## Depression: Tips to Help Yourself

As your healthcare providers help treat your depression, you can also help yourself. Keep in mind that your illness affects you emotionally, physically, mentally, and socially. So full recovery will take time. Take care of your body and your soul, and be patient with yourself as you get better.

### Be With Others

Don't isolate yourself—you'll only feel worse. Try to be with other people. And take part in fun activities when you can. Go to a movie, ballgame, religious service, or social event. Talk openly with people you can trust. And accept help when it's offered.



### Keep Your Perspective

- Depression can cloud your judgment. So wait until you feel better before making major life decisions, such as changing jobs, moving, or getting married or divorced.
- This illness is not your fault. Don't blame yourself for your depression.
- Recovering from depression is a process. Don't be discouraged if it takes some time to feel better.
- Depression saps your energy and concentration. So you won't be able to do all the things you used to do. Set small goals and do what you can.

### Take Care of Your Body

People with depression often lose the desire to take care of themselves. That only makes their problems worse. During treatment and afterward, make a point to:

- Exercise. It's a great way to take care of your body. And studies have shown that exercise helps fight depression.
- Avoid drugs and alcohol. These may ease the pain in the short term. But they'll only make your problems worse in the long run.
- Get relief from stress. Ask your healthcare provider for relaxation exercises and techniques to help relieve stress.
- Eat right. A balanced and healthy diet helps keep your body healthy.

