



Signs of Depression

Depression is a complex disease with many causes. These include inherited traits, hormone changes, traumatic or stressful events, alcohol or drug abuse, and certain medications or health conditions. Also, individual brain chemistry can impact mood, our perceptions and the way we experience life.

Symptoms of depression vary. A classic experience: You feel overwhelmed by sadness and withdrawn from relationships with little interest in normal activities. This mood continues all day, most days, and lasts from weeks to months. Depending on the type of depression, episodes may come and go.

Specific symptoms you may have:

- ✓ low self-esteem or hopelessness.
- ✓ feeling guilty or worthless.
- ✓ trouble concentrating, talking or performing tasks.
- ✓ trouble adjusting to a major setback.
- ✓ overeating or loss of appetite.
- ✓ oversleeping or insomnia.
- ✓ unusual lack of energy.
- ✓ suicidal thoughts.

To summarize, your depression may be:

Mild — having some symptoms that reduce your effort to do what you need to do.

Moderate — having many symptoms that often keep you from doing what you need to do.

Severe — having nearly all symptoms that keep you from doing what you need to do.

Don't let depression discourage you from getting help. If you have symptoms, see your health care provider without delay. Untreated, depression can revisit you, lasting months or years. Most people who get treatment rebound emotionally within 4 to 6 weeks.