

Recognizing Depression

If left untreated depression can have serious and damaging effects on your life. Quickly identifying it is an important first step in getting the help that you need.

Depression is a complex and often misunderstood medical condition. Everyone on occasion feels “blue” or lacks “get-up and go.” Sometimes these periods of sadness include feelings of nervous irritation, restlessness, or anger. When you are clinically depressed, however, these moods persist for a longer period of time, to the point where they cause notable disruptions in everyday life.

It is important to recognize the symptoms of this condition and be aware of them when they emerge, so you can take action to deal effectively with depression and get help if you need it.

Visit www.foh.hhs.gov/depression for some tips that may help you avoid the downward spiral of depression and for helpful ideas on moving forward if you are currently dealing with depression.

WARNING SIGNS

Some symptoms of depression include:

- Depressed mood most of the day, nearly every day
- Loss of interest or pleasure in most activities
- Significant weight loss or gain
- Sleeping too much or not being able to sleep nearly every day
- Inability to concentrate, remember things, or make decisions
- Fatigue or low energy nearly every day

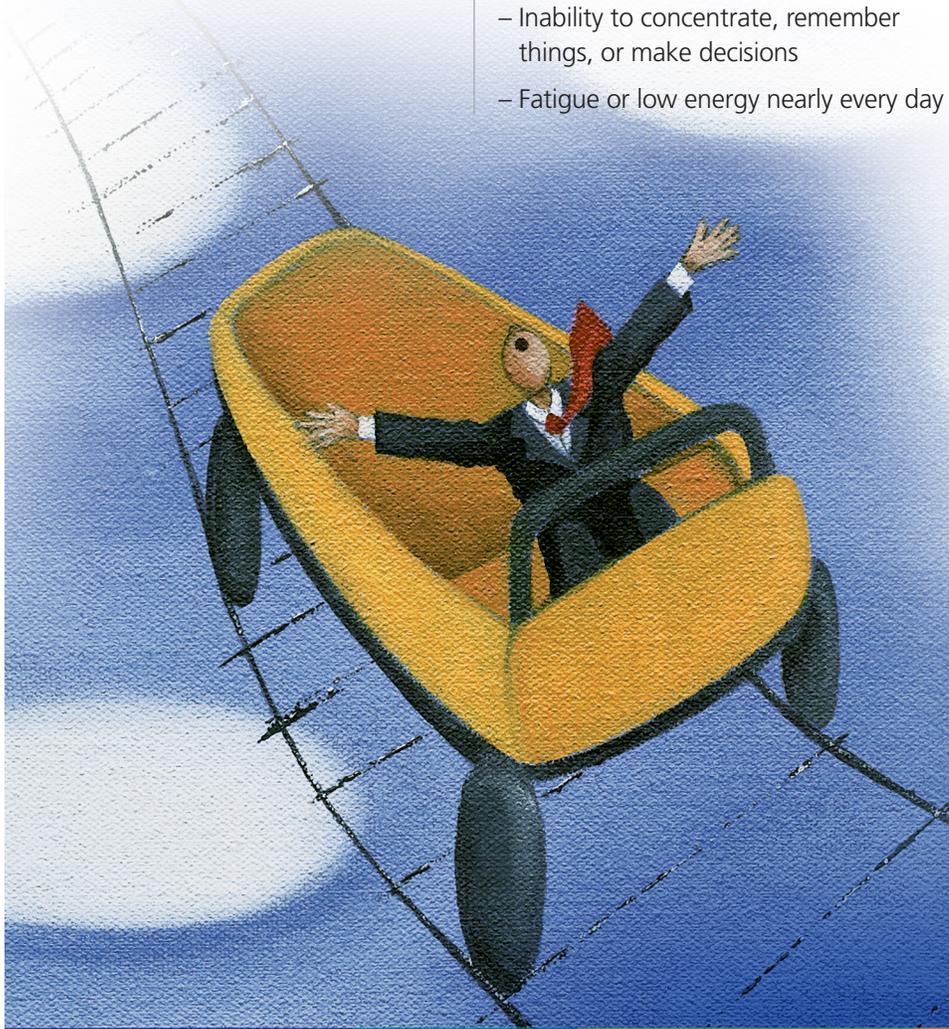
- Restlessness or decreased activity noticed by others
- Feelings of worthlessness or inappropriate guilt
- Recurring thoughts of death or suicide*

*Self-destructive behavior or thoughts, especially thoughts of suicide, require immediate attention. If you experience such feelings, call your EAP (you can get contact information through your HR department). You can also contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline’s toll-free number, which is available 24 hours every day of the year: **1-800-273-TALK (8255)**. This service is available to everyone. You may call for yourself or for someone you care about. All calls are confidential.

Clinical depression is usually diagnosed when you have five or more of the above symptoms over a two-week period. At least one of the symptoms must be either a depressed mood or a loss of interest or pleasure in most activities.

If depression becomes overwhelming for you or someone you know, or if it gets in the way of living life fully, talk to a mental health professional or a physician to start the first steps of moving ahead—and away from depression.

You deserve to have a happier life, so seek help when you need it.



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