

Stop depression in its tracks

Life is full of changes. It is common to get the blues or go through a difficult phase however, depression is more than just feeling sad. It is a serious mental health condition that requires understanding and professional help.

Know the symptoms

Depression can have different symptoms depending on the person, but in most people, a depressive disorder changes how they function day-to-day, and usually for more than two weeks.

Learn the **FACTS**:

- **Feelings:** Being extremely sad and hopeless, losing interest or enjoyment from most daily activities.
- **Actions:** Exhibiting restlessness or feeling that moving takes great effort, having difficulty focusing concentrating on things or making decisions.
- **Changes:** Gaining or losing weight due to changes in appetite, changing sleep patterns, experiencing body aches, pain or stomach problems.
- **Threats:** Talking about death or suicide, attempting suicide or self-harm.
- **Situations:** Experiencing traumatic events or major life changes, having a medical problem or family history of depression.

Take action

If someone says they feel depressed, your support and encouragement can play an important role in their recovery. Depression is often treatable.

- **Ask:** "When did you start to feel that way?" "Did something happen that made you feel that way?" Being supportive involves listening and offering encouragement and hope.
- **Stay calm:** If your family member or friend is in a crisis, it's important to remain calm. Listen to their concerns and make them feel understood—then find a way to get them help.
- **Be there:** Speak honestly and kindly. Tell them you care. Listen carefully and learn what they are thinking and feeling.
- **Help them connect:** Offer to help them find a doctor and go with them on the first visit. Suggest that they make a list of symptoms and ailments to discuss at the appointment.
- **Stay connected:** Ask your loved one to join you on a walk, see a movie with you or work with you on a hobby or other activity they previously enjoyed.

If you or someone you know is experiencing symptoms of depression, call your program for helpful resources.

Sources: NAMI.org, NIMH.NIH.gov



Employee Assistance Program
1-800-324-8914