

Your mental health is just as important as your physical health. Depression and other mental health issues are common, and like physical illnesses they need to be treated.

Mental health issues can affect your thinking, feelings, mood, how you relate to others, and even how you function throughout the day. Depression is a serious condition; it is more than just feeling sad or blue, but sadness can be a symptom.



## Know the signs and symptoms

For adults, signs and symptoms of a mental health issue can include:

- Feeling sad, down, irritable, nervous, or anxious.
- Excessive worry or fear.
- Loss of interest or pleasure in almost all activities.
- Changes in eating or sleeping habits, as well as sexual drive.
- Low energy or feeling tired.
- Withdrawing from family, friends, or social activities.
- Abuse of alcohol or drugs.
- Difficulty thinking, learning, or making decisions.
- Extreme mood changes.
- Intense fear of weight gain or concern with appearance.
- Experiencing delusions or hallucinations.
- Thoughts of death, suicide, or other self-harm.

Children can have different signs or symptoms, such as:

- Nightmares
- Aggression
- Temper tantrums
- Misbehaving or disobeying
- Changes in performance at school



## Talk to someone

Speaking with family, friends, or someone you trust can be a great starting point. They may be able to help you contact a provider who can help. You also can reach out to a:

- Physician
- Counselor
- Psychologist
- Social worker
- Therapist



## Be active in your care

Being informed will help ensure you get the treatment that works best for you. Be sure to ask:

- What types of treatment are available?
- Are outpatient, inpatient, or telehealth services available?
- Which treatment type best suits my concerns and ability to follow the care plan?
- What types of medication are involved, if any?
- How frequently do I need to take this medication?
- Are there any side-effects?
- What should I avoid doing or taking while on this medication?
- Will the dosage need to be adjusted over time?

## Have an advocate

Ask someone you trust to help by:

- Providing emotional support.
- Helping overcome the stigma of seeking help for mental health.
- Making or getting to appointments.
- Speaking up for you if you feel you are not getting the care you want or need.

- Keeping track of instructions from your provider or asking follow-up questions.
- Picking up medications.
- Navigating insurance or the healthcare system.
- Recognizing changes in your condition.
- Seeing if your state's mental health department has a peer advocate who can assist.

## Don't wait to get help

Remember: You are not alone – you can get the help you need. If you have signs or symptoms of depression or mental health issues, Speak Up for your mental health!

- [988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline](#)
- [Crisis Text Line](#) — Text NAMI to 741-741

- [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#) — Call 800-662-HELP (4357) or visit [FindTreatment.gov](#).
- [National Domestic Violence Hotline](#) — Call 800-799-SAFE (7233)
- [National Sexual Assault Hotline](#) — Call 800-656-HOPE (4673)

The goal of Speak Up™ is to help patients and their advocates become active in their care.

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