

DEPRESSION is a Real Disease

IF YOU HAVE SIGNS OF IT, SEEK TREATMENT.

Depression is more than just having a bad day. It's a constant feeling of sadness or anger, inability to concentrate, and lack of interest in anything. Unlike diabetes, a blood test may not be able to detect depression, but it is a medical illness, just the same. It should be diagnosed and treated by a health professional. Over 80 percent of people with depression can be treated with success. Treatment includes medication, counseling, and self-care measures.



CAUSES:

The exact cause of depression is not known. Most likely, it is caused and triggered by a combination of factors.

- Brain chemicals are not in balance.
- Having a family history of the illness
- Stressful life events, such as the death of a loved one, divorce, or job loss
- Physical or mental abuse or neglect
- Alcohol or drug abuse
- Medical conditions, such as cancer or chronic pain
- A side effect or withdrawal of some medications, such as steroids
- Sleeping problems
- Hormone changes, such as after having a baby or with menopause

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS:

- Feeling hopeless, helpless, worthless, guilty, or angry
- Fatigue. Loss of interest in life.
- Having a hard time concentrating or making decisions
- Feeling worried or anxious
- Changes in eating and sleeping habits
- Headaches, stomachaches or other aches and pains
- Thoughts of suicide or death

To a depressed person, there is no light at the end of the tunnel.

Action Step

See your doctor if you have had a lot less interest or pleasure in almost all activities most of the day, nearly every day, for at least two weeks.