

HOW ARE YOU FEELING?

QUIKRISK™ SELF-ASSESSMENT TEST

The following questionnaire can help adults identify feelings that may be related to depression.

	Often	Sometimes	Rarely/Never
1. I feel a persistent sad, anxious or "empty" mood.	10	5	0
2. I feel hopeless and negative.	10	5	0
3. I am consumed with feelings of worthlessness, helplessness or guilt.	10	5	0
4. I have difficulty concentrating, remembering things and making decisions.	10	5	0
5. I overeat or have no appetite at all.	10	5	0
6. I awaken much too early or I oversleep.	10	5	0
7. I abuse alcohol or drugs to cope.	10	5	0
	Yes	No	
8. I no longer enjoy activities that I used to.	15	0	
9. I am exhausted all the time and have no energy for normal daily activities.	15	0	
10. I have recurring stomach problems, headaches, and muscle or joint pain.	15	0	
11. I think about death or suicide.	15	0	

HOW DID YOU DO?

If you scored **0-20 points** and you answered "no" to statements 8-11, then you probably do not have a persistent problem with depression.

If you scored **25-50**, you may be suffering from some form of depression and should pay attention to these symptoms. Consider talking to your health care provider, especially if these feelings persist or get worse.

If you scored **55 or more**, you probably have a problem with depression and should call your health care provider without delay.

Note: This self-assessment is meant to help identify depressive symptoms, not diagnose clinical depression. As with any other illness, you should see your health care provider if you think you have symptoms of depression.

Are You Overly Anxious?

Nearly everyone feels anxious sometimes, whether due to a stressful event such as giving a presentation or an ongoing problem such as trouble with paying bills.

But if you often feel anxious, fearful and overwhelmed to the point of having difficulty getting through the day, you may need professional advice. Anxiety disorders can grow worse if left untreated. These illnesses wear several names, including panic disorder, social phobia and obsessive-compulsive disorder. The good news is that effective treatments are available.

How do you know whether you suffer from an anxiety disorder? Signs may include the following:

- Exaggerated tension and worry
- Trouble concentrating
- Trouble falling asleep or staying asleep
- Fear of death, losing control or going insane
- Fatigue, headaches, muscle tension and muscle aches
- Tremors, twitching or feeling shaky
- Shortness of breath, choking sensation
- Dizziness, dry mouth, sweats or chills, cold/clammy hands
- Nausea, diarrhea or abdominal discomfort
- Frequent need to use the bathroom
- Palpitations, rapid or irregular heartbeat
- Increased use of alcohol, tobacco or other drugs

Having one or more of these symptoms doesn't necessarily mean you have an anxiety disorder. But if you have several and they are persistent or accompanied by feelings of excessive, irrational fear and dread — or if you're at all concerned — consult your health care provider right away.



DEFEATING DEPRESSION

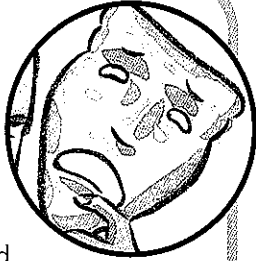
FINDING
HELP,
FINDING
HOPE



BEYOND THE BLUES

Depression is not a personal or emotional weakness. It's a serious medical illness that millions of people live with, usually in silence. Like many other illnesses, it can be treated successfully. First comes awareness, then reaching out for help, including a sound treatment program. **You can feel better.**

Depression was recorded as far back as the ancient Greeks, who believed "melancholia" was the result of "unbalanced humors" in the body. Scientists now know that depression is a biological disorder linked primarily to an imbalance of brain chemicals.



Depression Facts

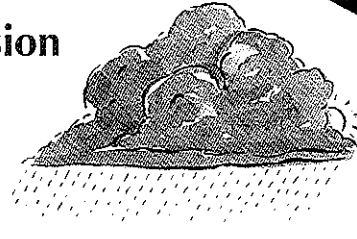
- Often runs in families
- Can be triggered by stress and major life changes
- Is often associated with:
 - alcohol and drug abuse
 - major medical illnesses including heart disease
 - eating disorders and anxiety
 - certain personality traits such as dependency and low self-esteem
- In women, it can also follow childbirth (postpartum) or accompany the years leading up to menopause, known as perimenopause.

A good diagnosis involves a complete physical, a psychological checkup and a review of your medical and family history. Without treatment, depression can last for months, years or even a lifetime.

Most people get the blues now and then. But when that down feeling lasts longer than a few weeks or you're having trouble functioning in daily life, it may be time to talk to your health care provider. Use the self-assessment feature in this brochure to increase your awareness about depression and its symptoms.

Defeating Depression

Some people may have one or more distinct episodes of depression in a lifetime. Others may have ongoing, chronic symptoms that do not interfere with functioning but keep them from feeling their best. **Depressive illness may take several forms. Among the most common are:**



- **major depression (the sad kind)**, characterized by symptoms such as fatigue, sad mood, feelings of guilt or despair, loss of interest in life, sleeping too much or too little, weight gain or loss, irritability, difficulty concentrating, or thoughts of suicide or death
- **dysthymia** or chronic, mild depression
- **bipolar disorder** (also called manic depression), when feeling down and depressed alternates with high-energy activity

Because some medications and viral infections can cause depressionlike symptoms, it's important to get a thorough evaluation if you think you have depression.

If you are diagnosed with depression, your health care provider may prescribe any or all of the following: **psychotherapy** (talk therapy) with a mental health professional; **prescription antidepressant medication**; and **natural approaches** such as regular exercise, a careful diet, relaxation and stress reduction, and elimination of alcohol and unnecessary drugs.

Find Help and Hope

For more information and support:

National Institute of Mental Health (www.nimh.nih.gov)
1-866-615-6464

National Alliance on Mental Illness (www.nami.org)
1-800-950-6264

Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance
(www.dbsalliance.org) 1-800-826-3632

You can also contact a family doctor; community mental health center; hospital psychiatry department and outpatient clinic; university- or medical school-affiliated programs; state hospital outpatient clinic; family services, social agencies or clergy; private clinics; and local medical and psychiatric societies. What's important is that you reach out and get the help you need.

Helping Yourself Through Depression

Confide in someone you trust rather than bottle up your thoughts and feelings.

Break up difficult tasks into smaller, more manageable chunks.

Keep your goals simple.

Don't blame yourself for not "snapping out of it." People with depression rarely do.

Postpone major life decisions such as a job change or a divorce. If a decision is absolutely necessary, consult someone who knows you well.

Mood Lifters

Feeling low can make it hard to get through the day. **These tips may help when you're struggling:**

Eat energy-boosting foods such as fruits, vegetables, beans and whole grains.

Avoid alcohol, drugs of abuse and unnecessary medications.

Eat less sugary and starchy foods to avoid troublesome energy dips.

Strive for regular exercise — 30 minutes most days of the week, even if only through 10-minute fitness bits.

Join in activities that make you feel better.

Try to be with others as often as you can.

Did You Know?

Heavy caffeine use can interfere with normal moods and make depression worse ... using antihistamines, sleeping pills, tranquilizers, antihypertensives and narcotics can contribute to depression ... depression is a common companion to illnesses occurring in older people.

