

Depression

Information and Coping Tips

We all go through times when we feel down or unhappy. For most, these periods are temporary and we soon feel better.

People who suffer from depression, however, have persistent, overwhelming feelings of sadness and hopelessness. These feelings affect their schoolwork, relationships, and their overall well-being.

Symptoms of Depression

- ▶ feelings of helplessness and hopelessness
- ▶ lack of energy
- ▶ feeling empty or numb
- ▶ loss of interest in activities and hobbies
- ▶ difficulty sleeping or sleeping too much
- ▶ trouble concentrating
- ▶ lack of appetite or eating too much
- ▶ thoughts of suicide
- ▶ headaches or stomachaches

Depression is caused by a number of things, including an imbalance of brain chemicals, illness, genetics, substance abuse, and stressful life events. Individuals with depression can't just snap out of it. *People suffering from depression also have nothing to be embarrassed about or to feel ashamed of.*

If you're suffering from depression, or just feeling down, there are things you can do to feel better. Keep reading for some tips.

Ways to Cope

Confide in others. When you're feeling down or depressed, this is the time to lean on your family and friends. Talk to them about what you're going through, and about how you're feeling.

Use positive self-talk. Change your negative thoughts into positive, encouraging messages.

Take care of yourself. Eat healthy and get enough sleep. Studies show there is a definite link between our sleep (quantity and quality) and our mood.

Get some exercise. Physical activity can lift your spirits and make you feel better, even if it's just going for a walk.

Help someone else. Helping others can make you feel good about yourself and curb feelings of depression. Look for opportunities to volunteer at your school and in your community.

Meditate. With guided meditation, a voice helps you relax your body and focus your thoughts. Guided meditations are available on streaming services like **Spotify**, and on apps like **Calm** and **Meditation Studio**.

Get professional help. Talk to a counselor or doctor. Therapy and/or medication may be *what's* needed to help you cope with your symptoms and feel better.

If you're having thoughts of self-harm or suicide, get help right away. Talk to a counselor or to someone who can help you.

You can also contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255 or chat online at [suicidepreventionlifeline.org](https://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org).