

What you should know about signs

What You Should Know About Signs of Depression

What are the emotional signs?

Persistently feeling hopeless, worthless, guilty, sad, bored, having recurring thoughts of death or suicide and/or exaggerated guilt or fears about physical disease or poverty are all emotional signs of depression.

What are the social signs?

Social signs of depression include loss of interest or pleasure in normal activities, including sex; withdrawal from others, problems with drugs or alcohol; compulsive spending; unsocial or rude behavior and irritability.

What are some signs at the workplace?

Workplace signs may include decreased productivity, poor performance, morale problems, lack of cooperation, excessive worry, frequent accidents, absenteeism, chronic aches and pains or health changes that seem to have no cause and frequent complaints of being tired.

What are the hidden signs?

Depression is often ignored or attributed to stress, the aging process, emotional problems, a personality weakness or alcohol and drug abuse. Becoming familiar with the signs of depression can aid in early diagnosis so people can be treated as outpatients and avoid lost time at work and costly treatment.

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Are You Depressed?

Take this simple quiz to find out. For each question, consider how you have felt for at least **two weeks** and give yourself points as follows:

- 0 = No, not at all
- 1 = Not much
- 2 = Sometimes
- 3 = Yes, definitely

	Score
I feel sad and lonely.	_____
I can't concentrate.	_____
My appetite or weight has changed.	_____
I have frequent crying spells.	_____
I am restless.	_____
I've lost interest in doing things.	_____
I have no energy.	_____
People annoy and irritate me.	_____
I have insomnia.	_____
I think about committing suicide.	_____

(If you answered "yes" or "sometimes" to question 10, please seek professional help immediately.)

Total Score _____

Add up your numbers for all 10 questions. If your score is 12 or higher, you need to seek a professional evaluation for depression. Even if you do not score that high on the test, and still suspect you are depressed, seek professional help. Depression is not a sign of weakness. It is a disorder that responds very well to various treatment programs. Seeking help is the first step toward recovery and feeling better.

About Prairie View

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Founded by the Mennonite churches in 1954, Prairie View is guided by a strong tradition of Christian caring and is private and not-for-profit. Prairie View offers a complete range of behavioral and mental health services including individual and family therapy, services for adults and older adults, pastoral counseling, alcohol and substance abuse treatment, child and adolescent services, research and marriage counseling. A 38-bed psychiatric hospital and partial hospital are located in Newton, KS.

Outpatient services are available at locations listed below. For further information about these services, call Prairie View at any location.

Psychiatric Hospital, Partial Hospital & Outpatient Services
1901 E. First St. • PO Box 467
Newton, KS 67114-0467
316-284-6400 • 1-800-362-0180

Outpatient Locations

335 N. Washington, Ste. 260
Hutchinson, KS 67501-4864
620-662-4700

504 S. Roosevelt St.
Marion, KS 66861-1358
620-382-3701

1102 Hospital Dr.
McPherson, KS 67460-2318
620-245-5000

700 Medical Center Dr., Ste. 240
Newton, KS 67114-8778
316-283-8300

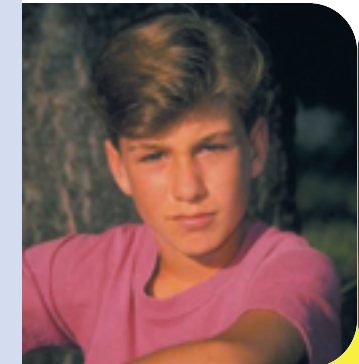
2939 N. Rock Rd., Ste. 100
Wichita, KS 67226-1100
316-634-4700

7570 W. 21st St. N., Ste. 1026-D
Wichita, KS 67205-1734
316-729-6555



DEPRESSION

When is it Serious?



1-800-362-0180
www.prairieview.org



Depression: When is it Serious?

Depression: When is it Serious?

Most people use the term “depressed” to describe their moods of feeling down in the dumps or experiencing a blue spell. Such depression can last for hours, days or longer and is a perfectly normal part of most every one’s experience. However, the word “depression” is used in various ways and can be easily misunderstood, as not all depression is normal. Depression can be divided into two broad categories - depression with a little “d” which is the kind that affects most of us and depression with a big “D.”

Depression with a little “d” can result from grieving over a loss, feelings of sadness for friends or others who may be hurting or even discouragement when we may not achieve a personal goal. But when these feelings last for more than two weeks, the person may require treatment.

Depression with a big “D” can last weeks, months or even years and is suspected when a person begins to develop physical symptoms that interfere with their functioning. With this type of depression, everything slows down physiologically. This includes the thought process, digestive tract, muscular activity and energy level. As a result, it is common to experience loss of appetite with an accompanying weight loss. However, occasionally the opposite occurs, and some people overeat. Sleep disturbances are also common. This may include insomnia and hypersomnia (wanting to sleep all the time).

There is usually constipation, decreased interest in sex, general lethargy and feelings of hopelessness. Other frequent symptoms include the inability to make decisions, low self-esteem, loss of interest in life and inability to enjoy anything, including things that previously brought pleasure.

In some cases the depressed person may become suicidal. Any suicide threat should be taken seriously. Such threats may be written or verbal, or they may be in the form of actions, for example, getting one’s affairs in order, bills paid, giving away possessions that had special meaning to others, etc. Suicide threats may often be a plea for help and one must never underestimate how much a severely depressed person is hurting.

Treatment can be very effective in relieving the suffering from depression. The typical treatment includes psychotherapy, planning a schedule of appropriate activities and medication. Most often this takes place on an outpatient basis. Talking about the problems often helps. Families and friends usually care deeply and want to help but are often at a loss as how best to help. A therapist, on the other hand, is trained to hear what is said and how it is said, and can often pick up clues that would be missed or not fully understood by family and friends.



Dealing with depression is very painful...

When treating depression, psychotherapy is often more effective when used in combination with medication. There is evidence of chemical disturbance in the brain of a depressed person. This chemical disturbance returns to normal as the depression retreats and vice versa.

Antidepressant medications correct the imbalance of chemicals in the brain slowly and are effective in most cases. As the brain chemistry normalizes the patient is often more receptive to the benefits of psychotherapy.

Dealing with depression is very painful for the family as well. There is a fine balance between tender, loving care and firmness. It is helpful, within reason, to push the depressed person to stay on some sort of daily activities schedule including constructive work. Any constructive



task one masters boosts self-esteem. Also, physical activity can relieve accumulated aggression and increase a person’s tolerance for stress. However, it would be unrealistic to expect a full day’s work from a severely depressed person.

Depression in a family member may blow the whistle on an unsatisfactory family situation. If this is the case, such an unsatisfactory situation is usually bad for everyone, and recognition of the situation can bring hope that change can occur in the family system. The whistle may



even be blown by some crisis-like event such as job quitting, a suicide attempt or asking for a divorce. Such a call for help can be a godsend both to the person involved and to the family, and efforts should be made to

capitalize on it. It is often helpful for the whole family to be involved in therapy for this reason. On the other hand, it is important for family members not to engage in “kicking themselves” and feeling guilty. There are many potential causes for depression outside the family.

It is possible for people who are severely depressed not only to get well but to become mentally healthier than they were before they became ill. Depression can be an opportunity to redefine oneself and to resolve long-standing conflicts. It can also be a time for a family to establish new and more effective ways of communicating and relating. In fact, depression handled properly can be a golden opportunity for personal growth and development in both the individual and their family.



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