

# Depression

Most of us have experienced depression at some point in our lives. It's also likely that we have watched as a family member, friend, or colleague has struggled with depression.

## Did You Know?

- 9.7% of youth in the U.S. have experienced major depression — 38% of them are not receiving the mental health services that they need.
- About 7.1% of adults over 18 have had at least one major depressive episode. Women are two times more likely than men to have a depressive episode.
- About 2.8% have bipolar disorder.
- Depression is the leading cause of disability in the U.S. for people ages 15 to 44.

## Depression's Many Forms

While we all may experience depression throughout our lives, the extent and severity may vary greatly from person-to-person. When one experiences sadness or depression it may represent a number of possible, underlying problems. While there are many types of depression, some common forms include grieving, seasonal depression, and postpartum depression. Other types of depression include clinical depression, depression as a result of other medical conditions, and bipolar depression. Depression can be a result of the use of either prescribed or non-prescribed substances, such as alcohol, blood pressure medication, opioids, or marijuana.

## Signs & Symptoms of Depression

Some people may experience depression only once or twice throughout their lifetime, however it is more common for people to have multiple episodes of depression. During these episodes, symptoms occur most of the day, and nearly every day. Some of the most common signs and symptoms may include:

- Feelings of sadness or hopelessness
- Loss of interest or pleasure in most or all regular activities
- Sleep disturbances, including sleeping too little or sleeping too much
- Low energy
- Difficulty focusing and concentrating
- Changes in appetite
- Anxiety, agitation or restlessness



- Frequent or recurrent thoughts of death, suicidal thoughts, or suicide attempts

## Treatment and Recovery

Depression can range from mild to severe, from brief episodes lasting a few days to chronic lasting over many years.

For milder forms of depression, recovery can come in the form of good self-care, diet, exercise, meditation, play, social support, support groups, and self-help books. For more severe depression, recovery starts with a good assessment from a professional that includes medical evaluation to rule out possible underlying causes, mental health evaluation to develop a treatment plan, and goals for depression treatment.

## ABOUT HOWARD CENTER

Howard Center has a long and rich history as a trusted provider in the community. With a legacy spanning more than 150 years, we have been providing progressive, compassionate, high-quality care and supports to those in need. Today, we offer an array of exemplary mental health, substance use, and developmental services across the lifespan. As Vermont's largest social service organization, our 1,600 staff help more than 19,000 people each year in over 60 locations throughout Vermont in collaboration with hundreds of community partners.

For a full list of resources please visit <https://howardcenter.org/community-education/world-mental-health-day/>

With support from



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