



DEPRESSION
Information for Patients and Families
Covenant Health
Mental Health Program
Grey Nuns Community Hospital & Misericordia Community Hospital

What are the signs and symptoms of depression?

A person with depression may have **five or more** of the following:

- sadness lasting 2 weeks or more
- loss of interest in daily activities
- feeling tired, loss of energy
- changes in sleep (sleeping too much or too little)
- changes in weight and/or appetite (eating too much or too little)
- feeling worthless
- feeling very guilty
- not able to think clearly or concentrate
- irritability
- memory problems
- trouble making decisions
- decrease in sexual desires
- withdrawing from family and friends
- thoughts of wanting to die

How is a depression treated?

It is important to know that depression **can** be treated.

Your doctor may suggest one or more of the following:

- medicines that may help
- psychotherapy (talk therapy)
- group therapy
- ECT (Electroconvulsive Therapy)

What can someone with depression do?

- Talk to your doctor about it
- Take medicines ordered for you as directed. Some medicines can take several weeks to work. If you have concerns about the effects of the medicine, talk to your doctor or pharmacist. Talk with your doctor before making any medication changes.

- Learn as much as you can about the illness and how it is treated
- Do not drink any alcohol as it is a depressant
- Activity - have something to do every day
- Get support - find the people in your life who will support you, and ask them for help

If someone you care about has depression

- find out what resources are available in your community
- listen - offer support
- do not criticize
- do not “push” the person to do things
- support them to do as much for themselves as they can
- do not take his or her comments personally
- do not take his or her illness personally

It is important to take care of yourself. Caring for and about someone with a depression is difficult. You will need support too.

Risk

There is a risk of suicide when a person is depressed. If you, or someone you care about is suicidal, get help **right away**.

You can:

- call your doctor
- call the distress line at **(780)482-HELP (4357)** to talk to someone
- call the Mobile Health Crisis Intervention Service at **(780)482-0222**
- go to **EMERGENCY** at your nearest hospital.

Where can you get more information?

- ask your doctor or nurse
- call Health Link - 780-408-5465

Notes

This information was produced by the Patient Education Committee in the Mental Health Program, Covenant Health in January 2009. Permission is given to photocopy as is. Reorder Form # 90252