

Did you know?

Proper treatment can bring relief for 80% of people with depression.

Helping With Depression

Take action if you suspect a friend and/or family member suffers from depression. It's a condition that can cloud thinking and make people believe they aren't worth helping, so they often can't help themselves. Each year millions of Americans suffer from depression. This lingering feeling of intense sadness can keep people from going to work or school, or caring for their children.

Two-thirds of people with depression don't seek treatment. Many people believe they can get over it by themselves, but depression is an illness that usually requires psychotherapy and/or antidepressant medication to treat it. If someone you know has at least five of the following symptoms of depression for more than two weeks, you can take steps to help that person:

- Persistent sadness or irritability
- Being unable to concentrate
- Withdrawal or loss of interest in previously pleasurable activities
- Difficulty falling and staying asleep
- Poor appetite
- Weight loss or weight gain
- Slowed speech and slowed movements
- Intense feelings of guilt and/or worthlessness
- Loss of energy or feelings of tiredness
- Thoughts of death or suicide

Offer to Help

Don't ignore it if you know someone showing nonsuicidal signs of depression, such as persistent sadness or irritability or withdrawal. Out of concern, approach the person and say, "You look different. Is there something wrong?" If your friend or loved one says nothing's wrong, you might say, "Are you sure?" Then get specific.

You might say, "I've noticed you're not yourself at work lately. You seem depressed. I'm concerned and want to help." Don't press the issue if the person doesn't want to discuss it. But hear out your loved one if he or she is receptive to what you're saying. Then encourage the person to see his or her family doctor for help. You could also offer to go with your loved one to the doctor's appointment.

Additionally, you might suggest a therapist and then offer to go with your loved one to the appointment or find another therapist if the one you recommend doesn't work out. To help someone who may be suicidal, approach the person and say, "You seem depressed. You're talking about ending your life. I think it's time to get help."

You should treat the situation as a medical emergency if the person has made a previous attempt at suicide or if there is a family history of suicide. Call 911 or the police. Contacting your state's local office of mental health is another option. The office may have a mobile crisis unit that dispatches a team of mental health professionals to evaluate a person in danger.

For additional information: www.nmha.org
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LifeSolutions offers support, information, and/or treatment options for employees and family members dealing with the impact of depression. For an appointment call 1-800-647-3327.

For more information,
use your WorkLife Resource Center:
www.lifesolutionsforyou.com

E-mail us if you've forgotten your company code:
askeap@eapsolutions.com

To schedule an appointment please call us:
1-800-647-3327