

Put an End to Depression

Life changes, such as the birth of a baby, divorce, death of a loved one, or loss of a job can and do leave people depressed. So can worrying about financial problems or illness. But sometimes you may feel empty and depressed for no apparent reason.

Symptoms of depression include:

1. •Persistent feelings of sadness or emptiness.
2. •Feelings of helplessness, hopelessness, guilt, and worthlessness.
3. •Loss of interest in pleasurable activities, including sex.
4. •Sleep disturbances.
5. •Loss of energy or enthusiasm.
6. •Difficulty in concentrating or making decisions.
7. •Ongoing physical symptoms, such as headaches or digestive disorders, that don't respond to treatment.

To overcome mild, hard-to-explain depression, try these approaches.

1. •Substitute a positive thought for every negative thought that pops into your head.
2. •Associate with congenial people, not negative people. They'll lift your morale.
3. •To focus your attention away from yourself, do something to help someone else.
4. •Get some physical exercise every day, even if it's just taking the dog for a walk. If you can do something more exhilarating, like biking, playing tennis, or chopping firewood, that's even better.
5. •Do something different. Walk or drive to someplace new, or try a new restaurant.
6. •Challenge yourself with a new project. It doesn't have to be difficult, but it should be enjoyable.

If you feel depressed for two weeks or longer, see a doctor. There may be a physical cause for the way you feel. Also, check with your doctor or pharmacist about any medication you may be taking. Depression is sometimes a side effect of a drug.