

## What is depression?

Depression is the most common mental disorder in the U.S., and can cause a person to feel sad, lonely or scared daily or almost daily. Depression can occur at any age and can concur with other serious medical illnesses and substance abuse. Research suggest depression is caused by a combination of genetic, biological, environmental and psychological factors.

## What causes depression?

There are many variables that may increase an individual's chance of experiencing depression, including:

- Abuse
- Certain medication
- Conflict
- Death or loss
- Genetics
- Major events
- Personal problems
- Serious illness
- Substance abuse

## What are the symptoms of depression?

Approximately half of those who experience symptoms of depression never get diagnosed or treated for their illness. If you are experiencing depression, you may have:

- Difficulty concentrating, remembering and making decisions
- Fatigue and decreased energy
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness and/or helplessness
- Insomnia, early-morning wakefulness or excessive sleeping
- Irritability and restlessness
- Loss of interest in activities that were once pleasurable
- Overeating or appetite loss
- Persistent aches or pains
- Persistent sad, anxious or "empty" feelings
- Thoughts of suicide

## How can I manage my depression?

One's treatment plan for depression is dependent on the type of depression and the severity of the illness. Treatment options can consist of one or a combination of psychotherapy, antidepressant medications, exercise and/or brain stimulation therapies. If you feel that you may be depressed, we strongly suggest discussing the topic with your physician.

For more information on depression management, visit [www.adaa.org](http://www.adaa.org)