

About Depression

Information for MFP Participants and their Caregivers

*Money
Follows
the Person*



What is depression?

Depression is an imbalance of substances called neurotransmitters in the brain. It may occur for no apparent reason, or it may be triggered by an upsetting event or loss.

What are the symptoms of depression?

- feelings of hopelessness;
- excessive guilt;
- lack of energy;
- loss of interest in normally enjoyable activities;
- social isolation;
- irritability;
- lack of concentration;
- memory difficulties;
- sleep and eating problems.

What are the different types of depression?

1. Major depression consists of depressive symptoms that continue for at least 2 weeks and are severe enough to interfere with work, sleep, eating, and the ability to feel joy.
2. Dysthymia consists of generally mild but persistent depressive symptoms that do not interfere with day-to-day functioning but do compromise the ability to enjoy life.
3. Bipolar disorder involves a cycle of depression and mania (a high-energy phase featuring overactivity and feelings of superiority). The depression and mania, which may switch from one to the other rapidly or slowly, may include psychotic features.

What should I do if I am depressed?

It is important to recognize that depression is a medical condition, not a sign of weakness. If you are depressed, see your primary care physician or a mental health professional, such as a psychiatrist or psychologist. I

How is depression treated?

Treatment is tailored to the individual. People with mild depression may receive cognitive behavior therapy, a type of talk therapy designed to teach effective strategies for coping with life's stresses. People with more severe depression or bipolar disorder may require medication in addition to cognitive behavior therapy. Above all, keep in mind that depression is a treatable disease with symptoms that can be relieved with proper treatment.