

## How is depression different from sadness?

Everyone has days and times when they feel sad. Sadness can turn into depression, but depression and sadness are different in the following ways:

- How long does the sadness last? Depression is experienced every day or most days and lasts for at least two consecutive weeks or longer.
- How bad are the symptoms? Depression makes it difficult to perform everyday activities and can prevent one from enjoying everyday life.

Depression is more than feeling sad or having a bad day. People with depression usually experience other symptoms, such as:

- Feeling sad all the time or most of the time
- Not wanting to do things they previously enjoyed doing
- Feeling irritable, or being easily frustrated
- Changes in sleep: trouble falling asleep or staying asleep, waking up too early or sleeping too much
- Eating more or less than usual
- Difficulty concentrating
- Feeling tired and exhausted for no reason
- Feeling worthless; having no confidence
- Thinking about dying or hurting oneself

You may have depression if:

- You have five or more of the symptoms listed above.
- If these symptoms have lasted two weeks or more.

Many factors may increase a person's chance of getting depression. Everyone is different, but some commonalities may lead to depression, such as:

- Experiencing a lot of stress
- Going through a difficult life event
- Major life change, even if the event was planned
- Medical problems
- Taking medication that is known to cause depression
- Using alcohol or drugs
- Family history of depression

Consider seeing a primary care physician or a qualified mental health professional if your symptoms are preventing you from performing everyday activities and enjoying life.

## Resources

- Depressive and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA): [www.dbsalliance.org](http://www.dbsalliance.org)
- International Foundation for Research and Education on Depression (iFRED): [www.ifred.org](http://www.ifred.org)
- National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH): [www.nimh.nih.gov](http://www.nimh.nih.gov)

Some content on this page was gathered from documents found on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [www.cdc.gov/tobacco/campaign/tips/diseases/depression-anxiety.html](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/campaign/tips/diseases/depression-anxiety.html) developed by the Tobacco Control Research Branch, Behavioral Research Program, Division of Cancer Control and Population Sciences of the National Cancer Institute in conjunction with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Here when you need us.

Call: 844-207-5465

Online: [guidanceresources.com](http://guidanceresources.com)

App: GuidanceNow<sup>SM</sup>

Web ID: LivingME

---

©2025 ComPsych<sup>®</sup> Corporation. All rights reserved. This information is for educational purposes only. It is always important to consult with the appropriate professional on financial, medical, legal, behavioral or other issues. As you read this information, it is your responsibility to make sure that the facts and ideas apply to your situation.