

Depression In Older Adults

What Is Depression?

Everyone feels sad sometimes. We all have bad days and time when we feel down. If you feel sad, hopeless or bored with things you normally enjoy for weeks or months, you may be experiencing depression.

Depression is a **treatable illness** that can affect your feelings, body and relationships. It can be hard to picture ever feeling good again. Depression often does not get better on its own. Without treatment it may even last for years. If you have any of these symptoms for more than two weeks, seek help.



Symptoms

- Feeling sad, lonely or anxious
- Sleeping problems (too much or not enough)
- Loss of pleasure from your favourite things
- Feeling guilty or having regrets
- Problems thinking and focusing
- Less energy / feeling tired or slow
- Feeling unwell / more aches / irritated
- Changes in eating habits or weight
- Thinking about suicide or death*

*If you (or someone you know) are thinking of hurting yourself or ending your life, call 911 now, or go to the hospital emergency room.

How Is It Diagnosed?

To know if you have depression, your doctor will likely:

- Discuss your thoughts and feelings to understand what is happening in your life.
- Do a physical exam and run tests to rule out other causes.

Family members often notice changes in the mood or behaviour of loved ones.



For More Information Visit:
<https://www.ccsmh.ca>



CCSMH
Canadian Coalition for
Seniors' Mental Health

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Coalition canadienne pour la
santé mentale des personnes âgées

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What You Can Do

There are many ways to start feeling better. Small lifestyle changes can greatly improve your well-being. A combination of approaches improves your chance of recovery.



Talk to a health professional about treatment options that can work for you!

Lifestyle and Health

- Keep doing the things you love.
- Listen to your favourite music.
- Stay active.
- Eat well.
- Sleep.
- Take medications as prescribed.

Social Supports

- Spend time with friends.
- Be around other people.
- Join in local activities.
- Go for a walk.
- Feel the sun on your face.
- Get involved in your community

Counseling and Therapy

Many people find it helpful to talk about their feelings with a counsellor or therapist. They can help you understand your thoughts and emotions. They can also offer suggestions and help you find ways to feel better.

Medication

If needed, your doctor will prescribe medicine (antidepressants) to treat your depression. Many options are available. Knowing how severe your depression is and what other medication you take will help your doctor choose the right one for you.

Getting older can be the best time of your life. You don't have to accept sadness and loneliness as a normal part of aging!

Depression is a treatable illness and you can start today. Talk about your feelings with your loved ones and your doctor. You deserve to be happy, energized, and fulfilled.

You are not alone!



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