

Depression

Depression is classified as a mood disorder. It may be described as feelings of sadness, loss, or anger that interfere with a person's everyday activities.

Depression causes

There are several possible causes of depression. They can range from biological to circumstantial.

Common causes include:

- **Family history.** You're at a higher risk for developing depression if you have a [family history](#) of depression or another mood disorder.
- **Early childhood trauma.** Some events affect the way your body reacts to fear and stressful situations.
- **Brain structure.** There's a greater risk for depression if the [frontal lobe of your brain](#) is less active. However, scientists don't know if this happens before or after the onset of depressive symptoms.
- **Medical conditions.** Certain conditions may put you at higher risk, such as [chronic illness](#), insomnia, chronic pain, or [attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder \(ADHD\)](#).
- **Drug use.** A history of drug or alcohol misuse can affect your risk.

About [21 percent](#) of people who have a [substance use](#) problem also experience depression. In addition to these causes, other risk factors for depression include:

- low self-esteem or being self-critical
- personal history of mental illness
- certain medications
- stressful events, such as loss of a loved one, economic problems, or a [divorce](#)

However, in many cases, healthcare providers are unable to determine what's causing depression.

Types of depression

Depression can be broken into categories depending on the severity of symptoms. Some people experience mild and temporary episodes, while others experience severe and ongoing depressive episodes.

There are two [main types](#): major depressive disorder and persistent depressive disorder.

Major depressive disorder

[Major depressive disorder](#) (MDD) is the more severe form of depression. It's characterized by persistent feelings of sadness, hopelessness, and worthlessness that don't go away on their own.

In order to be diagnosed with clinical depression, you must experience 5 or more of the following symptoms over a 2-week period:

- feeling depressed most of the day
- loss of interest in most regular activities
- significant weight loss or gain
- sleeping a lot or [not being able to sleep](#)
- slowed thinking or movement
- [fatigue](#) or low energy most days
- feelings of worthlessness or guilt
- loss of concentration or indecisiveness
- recurring thoughts of death or suicide

Persistent depressive disorder

[Persistent depressive disorder \(PDD\)](#) used to be called dysthymia. It's a milder, but chronic, form of depression.

In order for the diagnosis to be made, symptoms must last for at least 2 years. PDD can affect your life more than major depression because it lasts for a longer period.

It's common for people with PDD to:

- lose interest in normal daily activities
- feel hopeless
- lack productivity

- have low self-esteem

Depression can be treated successfully, but it's important to stick to your treatment plan.

Treatment for depression

Living with depression can be difficult, but treatment can help improve your quality of life. Talk to your healthcare provider about possible options.

The [Healthline FindCare tool](#) can provide options in your area if you don't already have a doctor.

You may successfully manage symptoms with one form of treatment, or you may find that a combination of treatments works best.

It's common to combine medical treatments and lifestyle therapies, including the following:

Medications

Your healthcare provider may prescribe:

- [antidepressants](#)
- antianxiety
- antipsychotic medications

[Each type of medication that's used to treat depression has benefits and potential risks.](#)

Psychotherapy

Speaking with a [therapist](#) can help you learn skills to cope with negative feelings. You may also benefit from family or group therapy sessions.

Online therapy options

Read our review of the [best online therapy options](#) to find the right fit for you.

Light therapy

[Exposure to doses of white light](#) can help regulate your mood and improve symptoms of depression. Light therapy is commonly used in [seasonal affective disorder](#), which is now called major depressive disorder with seasonal pattern.

Alternative therapies

Ask your healthcare provider about [acupuncture](#) or [meditation](#). Some [herbal supplements](#) are also used to treat depression, like [St. John's wort](#) (třezalka) , SAMe, and [fish oil](#).

Talk with your healthcare provider before taking a supplement or combining a supplement with prescription medication because some supplements can react with certain medications. Some supplements may also worsen depression or reduce the effectiveness of medication.

Exercise

Aim for 30 minutes of physical activity 3 to 5 days a week. [Exercise](#) can increase your body's production of [endorphins](#), which are hormones that improve your mood.

Avoid alcohol and drugs

[Drinking or misusing drugs](#) may make you feel better for a little bit. But in the long run, these substances can make depression and [anxiety](#) symptoms worse.

Learn how to say no

Feeling overwhelmed can worsen anxiety and depression symptoms. [Setting boundaries](#) in your professional and personal life can help you feel better.

Take care of yourself

You can also improve symptoms of depression by taking care of yourself. This includes getting plenty of [sleep](#), [eating a healthy diet](#), avoiding negative people, and participating in enjoyable activities.

Sometimes depression doesn't respond to medication. Your healthcare provider may recommend other treatment options if your symptoms don't improve.

These include [electroconvulsive therapy \(ECT\)](#), or [repetitive transcranial magnetic stimulation \(rTMS\)](#) to treat depression and improve your mood.

Preventing depression

Depression isn't generally considered to be preventable. It's hard to recognize what causes it, which means preventing it is more difficult.

But once you've experienced a depressive episode, you may be better prepared to prevent a future episode by learning which lifestyle changes and treatments are helpful.

Techniques that may help include:

- regular exercise
- getting plenty of sleep
- maintaining treatments
- [reducing stress](#)
- building strong relationships with others

Other techniques and ideas may also help you prevent depression.

15 Ways to Avoid Depression

1. Exercise regularly
2. Cut back on social media time
3. Build strong relationships
4. Minimize your daily choices
5. Reduce stress
6. Maintain your treatment plan
7. Get plenty of sleep
8. Stay away from toxic people
9. Eat well
10. Maintain a healthy weight
11. Manage chronic conditions
12. Read prescription medication side effects carefully (birth control pills)
13. Reduce alcohol and drug use
14. Get off nicotine
15. Plan for unavoidable known triggers (anniversary of a death or divorce)

ZDROJ: www.healthline.com

VIDEO: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z-IR48Mb3W0>

VIDEO: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yOx0Q273AsQ>

VIDEO: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tDcvvHeKyuw>