

## **Physical Signs and Symptoms of Depression**

Depression is a “whole- body” illness, involving your body, mood and thoughts. It affects the way you eat, sleep, the way you feel about yourself, and the way you think about things. It is not the same thing as a passing blue mood or down day. It is not a sign of weakness or a condition that can be willed or wished away. A person who is clinically depressed cannot merely “snap out of it”, or “pull themselves together” and get better. Without treatment, symptoms can last for weeks, months, or years. Appropriate treatment, however, can help most people who suffer from depression.

The signs and symptoms of depression can vary widely from person to person. Some of the more common symptoms include:

- A persistent sad or empty mood
- Loss of interest or pleasure in formerly enjoyable activities
- Fatigue or loss of energy
- Sleep disruptions or changes
- Appetite changes/weight gain or weight loss
- Difficulty concentrating, remembering, making decisions
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, helplessness , or hopelessness
- Thoughts of death or suicide
- Irritability
- Inappropriate or excessive crying
- Aches and pains or other physical symptoms that do not respond to treatment

There are several interventions used to treat depression, and treatment is likely to be effective in 80-90% of cases. Early recognition and intervention are important factors for a successful outcome.

If you or someone you care about is affected by depression call HelpPeople and ask to speak with a counselor.