



DEPRESSION

CAUSES



What causes depression?

Depression doesn't have just one cause. It usually happens because of a mix of biological, psychological and social factors.

Key factors that can contribute to depression:

Biological causes:

- Imbalances in brain chemicals like serotonin, dopamine, and noradrenaline
- Physical illnesses, dementia, or small strokes can also trigger depression
- Genetics: A family history of depression can increase the risk.
- Certain medications: Some prescription medications can trigger depression as a side effect.

Psychological and social factors:

- Life events: Major stressful experiences, such as the loss of a loved one, job termination, divorce, or living with a chronic illness, can trigger depression.

- Personality traits: Traits like low self-esteem, perfectionism, frequent self-criticism, and heightened sensitivity to feedback may increase vulnerability to depression.
- Trauma: A history of abuse and neglect is a significant risk factor for developing depression.
- Loneliness and isolation: Prolonged periods of social isolation or feelings of loneliness can contribute to the onset of depression.
- Childhood experiences: Adverse experiences during childhood can raise the likelihood of experiencing depression later in life (CCI 2025).



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SYMPTOMS



What are the signs & symptoms?

Depression is more than feeling 'down' occasionally. Clinical depression is persistent and affects daily functioning.

Emotional and Cognitive Symptoms:

- Ongoing feelings of sadness, anxiety, or emotional emptiness
- Loss of interest or enjoyment in activities once found pleasurable
- Feelings of hopelessness, worthlessness, or excessive guilt
- Increased irritability, restlessness, or frustration
- Trouble with focus, memory, decision-making, or clear thinking
- Recurring thoughts of death or suicide

Physical and Behavioral Symptoms:

- Constant fatigue or low energy

- Sleep disturbances, including insomnia or sleeping too much
- Noticeable changes in appetite or weight (gain or loss)
- Unexplained physical issues such as headaches, cramps, or digestive problems
- Withdrawing from social interactions with family and friends
- Slowed speech, thinking, or physical movements

When to seek help:

- If symptoms last 2 weeks or more
- If they interfere with work, relationships, or daily life
- If you're feeling suicidal, seek immediate help (WHO 2025).



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TREATMENTS



What are treatment options?

Depression can be treated in many ways, and the right approach depends on the type and severity of your symptoms. Some people may need medication, others benefit more from therapy, or a combination.

Common treatment options include:

Medication

- Antidepressants or mood stabilisers can help balance brain chemicals, especially in more severe types of depression. The right medication is chosen in consultation with a doctor after careful assessment, and it may take time to find the best option.

Talking therapies. These include:

- Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT), helps change negative thoughts and habits

- Other therapies like ACT, IPT, and Schema Therapy can also be helpful, depending on your needs

Self-help and lifestyle changes

- Regular exercise
- Healthy eating
- Meditation or relaxation
- Reducing alcohol and drug use
- Good sleep habits

Online tools and apps

(Australian Government DHDA, 2005).



Contact Information

Navigate Challenges. Cultivate Growth.

Get in touch today to learn more, see our availability, or book a session.

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