



Depression SYMPTOMS

RECOGNIZING THE SIGNS: UNDERSTANDING DEPRESSION SYMPTOMS

- **Loss of interest in all or almost all daily activities**

This can look like you previously enjoying hobbies like reading, cooking, or socializing stops doing them and feels indifferent or unmotivated even when encouraged to participate.

- **Increased irritability (Annoyed quicker than usual)**

This can look like getting frustrated or snapping over small things, like someone talking too loudly or a minor inconvenience, such as waiting in a short line

- **Trouble going to sleep, staying asleep, and/or sleeping too much**

This can look like going to bed exhausted but lying awake for hours, struggling to fall asleep. When you do finally sleep, you wake up frequently throughout the night. Despite feeling tired during the day, you may even end up sleeping excessively to catch up but still feel unrested.

- **Mental and physical functions slowing down**

This can look like you normally working quickly and efficiently but start to feel mentally foggy, taking longer to process information or make decisions. You move more slowly, even with simple tasks like getting dressed or preparing a meal, often feeling drained and unable to keep up with your normal pace

- **Fatigue or loss of energy nearly every day**

This can look like you feeling exhausted while doing basic life skills, like showering or cooking. Even after a full night's sleep, you wake up feeling drained, and simple tasks feel overwhelming and hard to complete

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Feelings of worthlessness

This can look like you not feeling good enough, doubting your abilities at work or in relationships. You may think others would be better off without you

Excessive or inappropriate (misplaced) guilt

This can look like feeling responsible for things that weren't your fault, like blaming yourself for a friend's problems. You may feel deeply guilty for taking a sick day at work, worrying they let their team down even though they were genuinely unwell.

Diminished ability to think or concentrate, or indecisiveness

This can look like struggling with simple choices, like what to eat or wear. You may also find it hard to focus on tasks at work or school, often rereading the same information without retaining it

Wanting to go to sleep and not wake up

This can look like you feeling overwhelmed by sadness and exhaustion that you look forward to sleep as an escape. You may go to bed wishing you wouldn't have to face another day,

Thoughts of wanting to die with a plan/ Intention to follow through

This can look like you feeling hopeless and overwhelmed by your struggles, leading them to develop a specific plan for ending their life. You might research methods or make preparations.

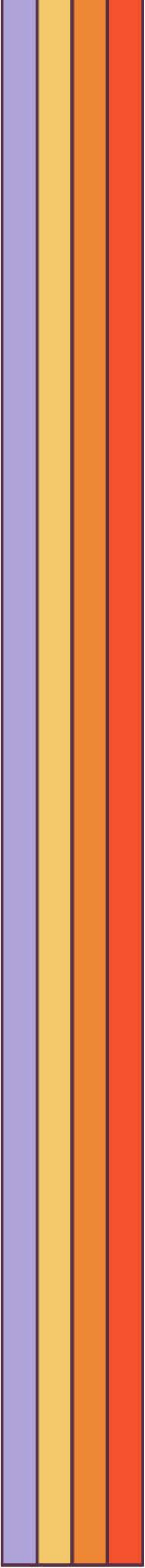
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● Significant weight loss when not dieting or weight gain

This can look like you suddenly lose a noticeable amount without making any changes to your eating habits or exercise routine. It may also look like suddenly starts gaining pounds rapidly without changing their diet or lifestyle. They might find themselves eating more out of boredom or emotional distress

● Feeling apathetic (numb)

This can look like you previously feeling excited about hobbies, socializing, or spending time with family suddenly finds that you no longer care about these activities. You go through the motions of daily life without any enthusiasm or emotion



Simple Coping Strategies for Managing Depression

Improving Mood Through Lifestyle Changes

Omega-3 Fatty Acids

Research shows that these fatty acids have antidepressant and anti-inflammatory properties. They also reduce inflammation, blood triglycerides, and potentially even reduce the risk of dementia. However, most Americans are not meeting the necessary threshold for Omega-3 consumption, and our bodies cannot naturally produce these acids. The two ways of obtaining Omega-3s is through diet or a supplement


Supplements: These are easily available online or in health food stores. Make sure the supplement specifically lists 1,000mg of EPA and 500mg DHA, two of the three types of Omega-3 fatty acids. This specific amount has been shown to reduce depression symptoms.

Anti-Rumination Coping Tools/Skills

Rumination is a common habit in depression, where people focus on their distress and its negative outcomes instead of solutions. This can worsen depression and affect thinking. Taking action on worries is often the best way to break the cycle.

Here are some proven ways to reduce rumination:

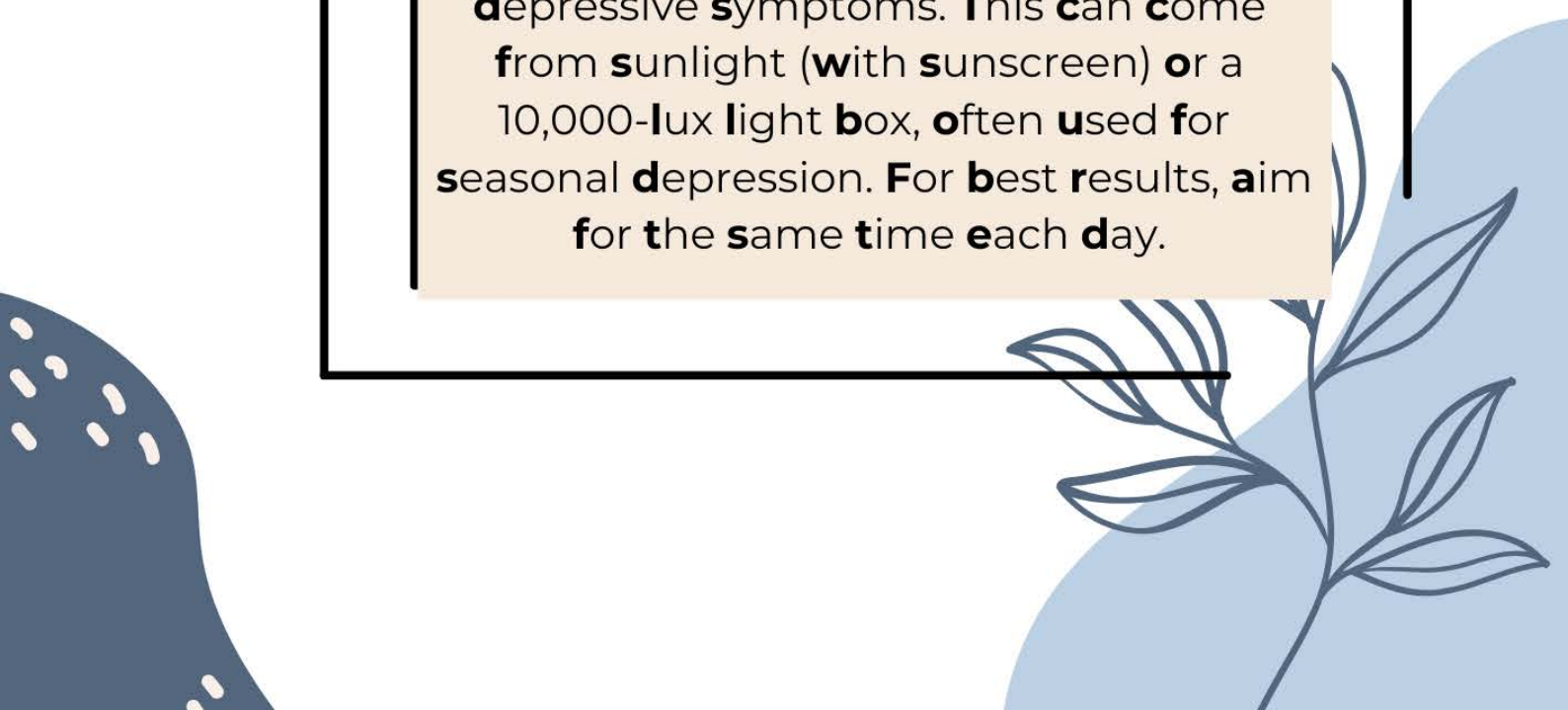
- **Schedule Time for Rumination:** Set aside 30 minutes to ruminate later. You may find you don't feel like it when the time comes.
- **Avoid Linking Small Goals to Big Goals:** Challenge the idea that big goals (like happiness) depend entirely on small ones (like weight loss).
- **Identify Triggers:** Rumination often happens in the morning or evening. Notice the times, places, or situations that make it worse so you can avoid them.
- **Try Journaling:** Writing down your thoughts can ease the burden and help you better understand and challenge them.
- **Practice Mindfulness:** Mindfulness techniques can reduce stress, increase awareness, and break the cycle of repetitive thoughts.



Diet: Fish are a rich natural source of Omega-3, along with chia seeds, flaxseeds, walnuts, brussels sprouts, algal oil, and perilla oil. The key is maintaining a high Omega-3 to Omega-6 fatty acid ratio, as the consumption of too many Omega-6 fatty acids is linked to inflammation.

Light Exposure

The average American spends 93% of their life indoors. Getting at least 30 minutes of bright light daily can reduce depressive symptoms. This can come from sunlight (with sunscreen) or a 10,000-lux light box, often used for seasonal depression. For best results, aim for the same time each day.





Behavioral Activation

Behavioral activation is the action of identifying things that you enjoy and fitting them into your weekly schedule. By getting yourself out of the house and doing things you enjoy, you can break the cycle of depression and boost your mood.

Directions: From the following list, circle activities that interest you, or you have previously enjoyed.

Physical activities:

- Walking or jogging
- Yoga or stretching
- Dancing and playing music at home

Social activities:

- Calling friends or family
- Attending a community event

Volunteering

Pleasurable activities:

- Listening to music
- Watching a favorite movie or TV show
- Cooking or baking

Hobbies and creative activities:

- Drawing or crafting
- Gardening
- Writing or journaling

Productive tasks:

- Cleaning or organizing
- Setting small goals
- Running errands

Self-care activities:

- Taking a bath or long shower
- Going to a spa
- Getting a massage or facial

Mindfulness meditation

Reading

Listening to a podcast

Exploring nature:

- Going to a park, hiking, or sitting outside
- Birdwatching or photography

Planning fun events:

- Planning a fun day out or trip
- Trying a new restaurant or coffee shop
- Organizing a get-together with friends or family

Add any other events or activities that you might find interesting or enjoyable:



Behavioral Activation

Activity Planning

Directions: Identify and schedule activities that you think will improve your mood or help you achieve your goals in the following table. Then, answer the reflection prompts at the end of each day.

Week beginning: _____

Activities	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
How was your mood?							
What went well today?							



Behavioral Activation

What barriers did I face?

How did these activities impact my mood?

How might I change my schedule for next week?

Fun Activities Catalogue

The following is a list of activities that might be fun and pleasurable for you. Feel free to add your own fun activities to the list.

1. Going to a quiz or trivia night
2. Spending time in nature
3. Watching the clouds drift by
4. Debating
5. Painting my nails
6. Going ice skating, roller skating/blading
7. Scheduling a day with nothing to do
8. Giving positive feedback about something (e.g. writing a letter or email about good service)
9. Feeding the birds
10. Spending an evening with good friends
11. Making jams or preserves
12. Going out to dinner
13. Buying gifts
14. Having a political discussion
15. Repairing things around the house
16. Washing my car
17. Watching TV, videos
18. Sending a loved one a card in the mail
19. Baking something to share with others (e.g. family, neighbours, friends, work colleagues)
20. Taking a sauna, spa or a steam bath
21. Having a video call with someone who lives far away
22. Organising my wardrobe
23. Playing musical instruments
24. Going to the ballet or opera
25. Lighting scented candles, oils or incense
26. Spending time alone
27. Exercising
28. Putting up a framed picture or artwork
29. Flirting
30. Entertaining
31. Riding a motorbike
32. Wine tasting
33. Going to the planetarium or observatory
34. Birdwatching
35. Doing something spontaneously
36. Going on a picnic
37. Having a warm drink
38. Massaging hand cream into my hands
39. Fantasising about the future
40. Laughing
41. Flying a plane
42. Playing tennis or badminton
43. Clearing my email inbox
44. Planting a terrarium
45. Playing lawn games (e.g. bowls, croquet, bocce)
46. Going to a party
47. Getting out of debt/paying debts
48. Seeing and/or showing photos
49. Going on a city tour
50. Going to an agricultural show
51. Jogging, walking
52. Going to home opens
53. Researching a topic of interest
54. Going to the beach
55. Redecorating
56. Volunteering for a cause I support
57. Smelling a flower
58. Opening the curtains and blinds to let light in
59. Going to the zoo or aquarium
60. Doing jigsaw puzzles
61. Donating old clothes or items to charity
62. Lying in the sun
63. Learning a magic trick
64. Talking on the phone
65. Listening to a podcast or radio show
66. Walking around my city and noticing architecture of buildings
67. Doing arts and crafts
68. Going on a ghost tour
69. Sketching, painting
70. Mowing the lawn
71. Going horseback riding
72. Doing the dishes
73. Sitting outside and listening to birds sing
74. Going to a free public lecture
75. Travelling to national parks
76. Going to a fair or fete
77. Playing cards
78. Putting moisturising cream on my face / body
79. Volunteering at an animal shelter
80. Re-watching a favourite movie
81. Gardening
82. Going camping
83. Playing volleyball
84. Going bike riding
85. Entering a competition
86. Doing crossword puzzles
87. Patting or cuddling my pet
88. Cooking a special meal
89. Soaking in the bathtub
90. Having a treatment at a day spa (e.g. facial)
91. Putting extra effort in to my appearance
92. Playing golf
93. Doing a favour for someone
94. Building a bird house or feeder
95. Looking at pictures of beautiful scenery
96. Having family get-togethers
97. Listening to music
98. Learning a new language
99. Taking a free online class
100. Working
101. Washing my hair
102. Singing around the house

103. Flipping through old photo albums
104. Upcycling or creatively reusing old items
105. Going sailing
106. Stretching muscles
107. Maintaining a musical instrument (e.g. restringing guitar)
108. Playing soccer
109. Buying clothes
110. Going to the botanic gardens
111. Going to a scenic spot and enjoying the view
112. Going to the speedway
113. Snuggling up with a soft blanket
114. Listening to an audiobook
115. Going to see live stand-up comedy
116. Writing down a list of things I am grateful for
117. Maintaining an aquarium
118. Playing Frisbee
119. Teaching a special skill to someone else (e.g. knitting, woodworking, painting, language)
120. Playing chess (with a friend or at a local club)
121. Going to a games arcade
122. Jumping on a trampoline
123. Sending a text message to a friend
124. Going fishing
125. Doodling
126. Putting a vase of fresh flowers in my house
127. Participating in a protest I support
128. Going to a movie
129. Surfing, bodyboarding or stand up paddle boarding
130. Baking home-made bread
131. Walking barefoot on soft grass
132. Watching a movie marathon
133. Skipping/ jumping rope
134. Being physically intimate with someone I want to be close to
135. Going to karaoke
136. Wearing an outfit that makes me feel good
137. Cooking some meals to freeze for later
138. Hobbies (stamp collecting, model building, etc.)
139. Talking to an older relative and asking them questions about their life
140. Listening to classical music
141. Photography
142. Watching funny videos on YouTube
143. Doing something religious or spiritual (e.g. going to church, praying)
144. Seeing a movie at the drive-in or outdoor cinema
145. Making my bed with fresh sheets
146. Lifting weights
147. Early morning coffee and newspaper
148. Planning a themed party (e.g. costume, murder mystery)
149. Wearing comfortable clothes
150. Shining my shoes
151. Acting
152. Going swimming
153. De-cluttering
154. Going rock climbing
155. Whittling
156. Going on a ride at a theme park or fair
157. Arranging flowers
158. Going to the gym
159. Working on my car or bicycle
160. Juggling or learning to juggle
161. Contacting an old school friend
162. Calligraphy
163. Sleeping
164. Driving
165. Going crabbing
166. Playing with my pets
167. Abseiling
168. Going kayaking, canoeing or white-water rafting
169. Listening to the radio
170. Doing Sudoku
171. Planting vegetables or flowers
172. Walks on the riverfront/foreshore
173. Shooting pool or playing billiards
174. Getting an indoor plant
175. Surfing the internet
176. Doing embroidery, cross stitching
177. Browsing a hardware store
178. Donating blood
179. Buying books
180. Meditating
181. Training my pet to do a new trick
182. Planning a day's activities
183. Waking up early, and getting ready at a leisurely pace
184. Going to a Bingo night
185. Playing ping pong / table tennis
186. Buying an ice-cream from an ice-cream truck
187. Going on a hot air balloon ride
188. Sightseeing
189. Organising my work space
190. Dangling my feet off a jetty
191. Writing (e.g. poems, articles, blog, books)
192. Dancing in the dark
193. Having an indoor picnic
194. Reading classic literature
195. Going on a date
196. Taking children places
197. Going whale watching
198. Putting on perfume or cologne
199. Digging my toes in the sand
200. Hitting golf balls at a driving range
201. Reading magazines or newspapers
202. Calling a friend
203. Sending a handwritten letter
204. Going snorkelling
205. Going hiking, bush walking
206. Reading fiction

207. Meeting new people
208. Doing 5 minutes of calm deep breathing
209. Buying new stationary
210. Turning off electronic devices for an hour (e.g. computer, phone, TV)
211. Buying music (MP3s, CDs, records)
212. Relaxing
213. Going to a footy game (or rugby, soccer, basketball, etc.)
214. Going skiing
215. Doing woodworking
216. Planning a nice surprise for someone else
217. Playing video games
218. Holding a garage sale
219. Saying "I love you"
220. Making a playlist of upbeat songs
221. Colouring in
222. Playing laser tag or paintball
223. Joining a community choir
224. Doing a nagging task (e.g. making a phone call, scheduling an appointment, replying to an email)
225. Taking a ferry ride
226. Shaping a bonsai plant
227. Watching planes take off/ land at the airport
228. Planning my career
229. Reading non-fiction
230. Writing a song or composing music
231. Taking my dog to the park
232. Borrowing books from the library
233. Having a barbecue
234. Sewing
235. Dancing
236. Having lunch with a friend
237. Talking to or introducing myself to my neighbours
238. Holding hands
239. Going to a free art exhibition
240. Making a 'To-Do' list of tasks
241. Travelling abroad, interstate or within the state
242. Having quiet evenings
243. Geocaching
244. Singing in the shower
245. Browsing at a second hand book shop
246. Test driving an expensive car
247. Refurbishing furniture
248. Exchanging emails, chatting on the internet
249. Knitting/crocheting/quilting
250. Napping in a hammock
251. Skipping stones on the water
252. Doing ballet, jazz/tap dancing
253. Archery
254. Going on a Segway tour
255. Visiting a grandparent
256. Making a gift for someone
257. Having discussions with friends
258. Trying a new recipe
259. Pampering myself at home (e.g. putting on a face mask)
260. Watching my children play
261. Going to a community or school play
262. Making jewellery
263. Reading poetry
264. Going to the hills
265. Getting/giving a massage
266. Shooting hoops at the local basketball courts
267. Flying kites
268. Savouring a piece of fresh fruit
269. Playing hockey
270. Eating outside during my lunch break
271. Floating on a pool lounge
272. Making a pot of tea
273. Using special items (e.g. fine china, silver cutlery, jewellery, clothes, souvenir mugs)
274. Doing a DIY project (e.g. making homemade soap, making a mosaic)
275. Taking care of my plants
276. Telling a joke
277. Going to a public place and people watching
278. Discussing books
279. Going window shopping
280. Watching boxing, wrestling
281. Giving someone a genuine compliment
282. Practising yoga, Pilates
283. Walking around the block
284. Shaving
285. Genuinely listening to others
286. Participating in a clean-up (e.g. picking up litter at the beach or park)
287. Eating fish and chips at the beach
288. Rearranging the furniture in my house
289. Doing water aerobics
290. Blowing bubbles
291. Buying new furniture
292. Watching a sunset or sunrise
293. Star gazing
294. Watching a funny TV show or movie
295. Making pottery, or taking a pottery class
296. Playing mini golf
297. Recycling old items
298. Going to a water park
299. Practising karate, judo
300. Boxing a punching bag
301. Cleaning
302. Driving a Go Kart
303. Daydreaming
304. Learning about my family tree
305. Picking berries at a farm
306. Watching kids play sport
307. Setting up a budget
308. Writing a positive comment on a website /blog
309. Getting a manicure or pedicure
310. Collecting things (coins, shells, etc.)

311. Playing cricket
312. Signing up for a fun run
313. Scrapbooking
314. Accepting an invitation
315. Cooking an international cuisine
316. Solving riddles
317. Scuba diving
318. Watching home videos
319. Building a sand castle
320. Planning a holiday
321. Sitting at the beach or river and watching the movement of the water
322. Watching fireworks
323. Making home-made pizza
324. Cheering for a sports team
325. Origami
326. Doing something nostalgic (e.g. eating a childhood treat, listening to music from a certain time in my life)
327. Joining a club (e.g. film, book, sewing, etc.)
328. Lighting candles
329. Going bowling
330. Going to museums, art galleries
331. Reading comics
332. Having coffee at a café
333. Trying new hairstyles
334. Taking a road trip
335. Watching a fireplace or campfire
336. Whistling
337. Playing darts
338. Going to a flea market
339. Working from home
340. Buying a meal from a food truck or hawkers market and eating outdoors
341. Operating a remote control car / plane
342. Playing board games (e.g. Scrabble, Monopoly)
343. Savouring a piece of chocolate
344. Hunting for a bargain at an op shop, garage sale or auction
345. Buying, selling stocks and shares
346. Going to plays and concerts
347. Buying fresh food at the market
348. Beachcombing
349. Dining out at a restaurant or café
350. Harvesting home grown produce
351. Exploring with a metal detector
352. Giving someone a hug
353. Taking a holiday
354. Going to the hairdresser or barber
355. Swimming with dolphins
356. Picking flowers
357. Sandboarding
358. Going to the beauty salon
359. Buying myself something nice
360. Playing squash

361. Eating something nourishing (e.g. chicken soup)
362. Babysitting for someone
363. Taking a class (e.g. cooking, improvisation, acting, art)
364. Combing or brushing my hair
365. Writing diary/journal entries

Others:

[illegible]