

Depression:

What is it?

The following information is from the National Institute of Mental Health, pamphlet 00-3561, developed for use by the general public, and is not intended as medical/clinical advice or treatment. If you feel that you may have symptoms of depression, you should consult your doctor or a behavioral health professional. Only your health care provider can make a diagnosis or recommend a treatment plan. For more information about your behavioral health benefits, you can call the member services or behavioral health telephone number listed on your health care identification card.

Depression is an illness that can affect the body, mood, and thoughts. It affects the way a person eats and sleeps, the way one feels about oneself and the way one thinks about things. Depression is not the same as a passing blue mood. It is not a sign of personal weakness or a condition that can be willed or wished away. People with depression cannot merely pull themselves together and get better. Without treatment, a person can feel bad for weeks, months, or years. The right treatment, however, can help most people who suffer from depression. In any given 1-year period, 9.5 percent of the population, or about 18.8 million American adults, suffer from depressive illness. For more information about depression, you can contact these organizations and their relevant Web sites:

National Alliance for the Mentally Ill
1.703.524.7600; 1.800.950.NAMI
Web site: <http://www.nami.org>

**National Depressive and Manic
Depressive Association**
1.312.642.0049; 1.800.826.3632
Web site: <http://www.ndmda.org>

**National Institute of Mental
Health Information Resources
and Inquiries Branch**
1.301.443.4513
Web site: <http://www.nimh.nih.gov>

National Mental Health Association
1.703.684.7722; 1.800.969.6642
Web site: <http://www.nmha.org>

**National Foundation for Depressive
Illnesses, Inc.**
1.212.268.4260; 1.800.239.1265
Web site: <http://www.depression.org>

Any reference in this material to other organizations or companies, including their Internet Web sites, is not an endorsement or warranty of services, information or products provided by those organizations or companies.

The following are typical signs of depression:

- Sad, anxious, or empty mood
- Feelings of hopelessness
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, helplessness
- Loss of interest or pleasure in hobbies and things that were once enjoyed, including sex
- Low energy level, being slowed down
- Problems remembering and making decisions
- Trouble falling asleep, waking early, or oversleeping
- Overeating or not eating enough with weight gain or weight loss
- Thoughts of death or suicide; suicide attempts
- Feeling on the edge
- Symptoms that do not get better even after having seen a doctor, such as headaches, stomach problems, and pain

Help is Here.



CIGNA HealthCare