

[return to home](#)

Oct. 15, 2010

Enter search term here

SEARCH

Conditions

Symptoms

Supplements

Procedures

Lifestyle

More

Home Diseases and Conditions Depression (major depression) Basics Symptoms

# Depression (major depression)

Text Size:

Basics

In-Depth

Multimedia

Expert Answers

Expert Blog

Resources

What's New

Print

Share

Reprints

Advertisement

Definition

Symptoms

Causes

Risk factors

Complications

Preparing for your appointment

Tests and diagnosis

Treatments and drugs

Lifestyle and home remedies

Alternative medicine

Coping and support

Prevention

## Symptoms

By Mayo Clinic staff

Depression symptoms include:

- Feelings of sadness or unhappiness
- Irritability or frustration, even over small matters
- Loss of interest or pleasure in normal activities
- Reduced sex drive
- Insomnia or excessive sleeping
- Changes in appetite — depression often causes decreased appetite and weight loss, but in some people it causes increased cravings for food and weight gain
- Agitation or restlessness — for example, pacing, hand-wringing or an inability to sit still
- Slowed thinking, speaking or body movements
- Indecisiveness, distractibility and decreased concentration
- Fatigue, tiredness and loss of energy — even small tasks may seem to require a lot of effort
- Feelings of worthlessness or guilt, fixating on past failures or blaming yourself when things aren't going right
- Trouble thinking, concentrating, making decisions and remembering things
- Frequent thoughts of death, dying or suicide
- Crying spells for no apparent reason
- Unexplained physical problems, such as back pain or headaches

For some people, depression symptoms are so severe that it's obvious something isn't right. Others people feel generally miserable or unhappy without really knowing why.

Depression affects each person in different ways, so depression symptoms vary from person to person. Inherited traits, age, gender and cultural background all play a role in how depression may affect you.

### GET STARTED

#### Depression symptoms in children and teens

Common symptoms of depression can be a little different in children and teens than they are in adults.

- In younger children, symptoms of depression may include sadness, irritability, hopelessness and worry.
- Symptoms in adolescents and teens may include anxiety, anger and avoidance of social interaction.

**Cymbalta**<sup>®</sup> DELAYED RELEASE CAPSULES  
duloxetine HCl

Ask your doctor if Cymbalta is right for you.

Learn more at [cymbalta.com](http://cymbalta.com)

Cymbalta is indicated for the treatment of depression.

**Safety information and Boxed Warning**

- glaucoma or the control of blood sugar in some patients with diabetes
- about your alcohol use
- if you are taking nonprescription or prescription medicines, including those for migraine, to address a possible life-threatening condition
- if you are taking NSAID pain relievers, aspirin, or blood thinners. Use with Cymbalta may increase bleeding risk
- if you are pregnant, plan to become pregnant during ..

▶ Prescribing Information  
▶ Medication Guide

Check out these best-sellers and special offers on books and newsletters from Mayo Clinic.

- Try Mayo Clinic Health Letter free!
- Mayo Clinic Wellness Solutions for Fibromyalgia DVD
- Mayo Clinic Guide to Alzheimers Disease
- Get your free trial issue of Women's HealthSource!
- NOW AVAILABLE! — The Mayo Clinic Diet book

#### AMITIZA® (lubiprostone)

Official web site for AMITIZA. Get the product profile and more...  
[hcp.amitiza.com](http://hcp.amitiza.com)

#### Plus Size Clothing

Shop Stylish Clothes, Sizes 12-38. All Your Favorite Brands, One Site!  
[Sonsi.com](http://Sonsi.com)

**Free E-Newsletters**

Subscribe to receive the latest updates on health topics.

[About our newsletters](#)

- Housecall
- Alzheimer's caregiving
- Living with cancer

Enter e-mail

**SUBSCRIBE**

### RSS Feeds

Get **free personalized** health guidance for you and your family.

feeling down Site help Contact us E-newsletter Blogs  
Podcasts Slide shows Videos Site map

- In older adults, depression may go undiagnosed because symptoms — for example, fatigue, loss of appetite, sleep problems or loss of interest in sex — may seem to be caused by other illnesses
- Older adults with depression may say they feel dissatisfied with life in general, bored, helpless or worthless. They may always want to stay at home, rather than going out to socialize or doing new things.
- Suicidal thinking or feelings in older adults is a sign of serious depression that should never be taken lightly, especially in men. Of all people with depression, older adult men are at the highest risk of suicide.

**When to see a doctor**

If you feel depressed, make an appointment to see your doctor as soon as you can. Depression symptoms may not get better on their own — and depression may get worse if it isn't treated. Untreated depression can lead to other mental and physical health problems or problems in other areas of your life. Feelings of depression can also lead to suicide.

If you're reluctant to seek treatment, talk to a friend or loved one, a health care professional, a faith leader, or someone else you trust.

**If you have suicidal thoughts**

If you or someone you know is having suicidal thoughts, get help right away. Here are some steps you can take:

- Contact a family member or friend.
- Seek help from your doctor, a mental health provider or other health care professional.
- Call a suicide hot line number — in the United States, you can reach the toll-free, 24-hour hot line of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 800-273-8255 to talk to a trained counselor.
- Contact a minister, spiritual leader or someone in your faith community.

**When to get emergency help**

If you think you may hurt yourself or attempt suicide, call 911 or your local emergency number immediately. If you have a loved one who has harmed himself or herself, or is seriously considering doing so, make sure someone stays with that person. Take him or her to the hospital or call for emergency help.

[Definition](#)

[Causes](#)

**Mayo Clinic services**

[Depression treatment at Mayo Clinic](#)

**See Also**

- [Depression self-assessment](#)
- [Nervous breakdown: What does it mean?](#)
- [Repeat episodes of depression: Look for warning signs](#)
- [Male depression: Understanding the issues](#)
- [Depression in teens: Watch for signs](#)
- [Pain and depression: Is there a link?](#)

[Dysthymia](#)

[Teen depression](#)

## References

Feb. 11, 2010

DS00175

© 1998-2010 Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research (MFMER). All rights reserved. A single copy of these materials may be reprinted for noncommercial personal use only. "Mayo," "Mayo Clinic," "MayoClinic.com," "EmbodyHealth," "Enhance your life," and the triple-shield Mayo Clinic logo are trademarks of Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research.

[Privacy policy](#) (Updated July 8, 2010) [Terms and conditions of use policy](#) (Updated July 8, 2010)

LEGAL CONDITIONS AND TERMS OF USE APPLICABLE TO ALL USERS OF THIS SITE. ANY USE OF THIS SITE CONSTITUTES YOUR AGREEMENT TO THESE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF USE.

© 1998-2010 Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research. All rights reserved.

We comply with the  HONcode standard for trustworthy health information: [verify here.](#)

[Twitter](#) [YouTube](#)