

DEPRESSION

(MAJOR DEPRESSIVE DISORDER)

If you suspect you may be depressed, read through the checklist below. If the symptoms seem to describe what you are feeling, please take this list to your physician and discuss it with him or her.

- A. You are experiencing at least one of the following moods which interfere with your life:
1. Abnormal depressed mood for most of the day, nearly every day, for at least two weeks.
 2. Abnormal loss of interest and pleasure most of the day, nearly every day, for at least two weeks.
 3. If you are 18 or younger, abnormal irritable mood most of the day, nearly every day, for at least two weeks.
- B. You have experienced *at least five* of the following symptoms daily for at least two weeks when there is no other personal situation (like grief); medical condition (low thyroid, for example); or medication, alcohol, or drug use that may be causing the symptoms:
1. Abnormal sad, anxious, or “empty” mood (or irritable mood, if age 18 or younger) most of the day.
 2. Loss of interest or pleasure in things you used to enjoy (hobbies, activities, and sex, for example).
 3. Change in appetite or weight, either:
 - Loss of appetite or abnormal weight loss (when not dieting).
 - Increase in appetite or abnormal weight gain.
 4. Change in normal sleeping pattern, either difficulty sleeping (insomnia), waking early in the morning, or sleeping more than usual (hypersomnia).
 5. Feeling lethargic, moving in “slow motion.”
 6. Abnormal agitation that can’t be controlled.
 7. Abnormal fatigue or loss of energy.
 8. Feeling hopeless, pessimistic, worthless, helpless, or inappropriately guilty.
 9. Difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions.
 10. Thoughts of death (not just fear of dying) or suicide.

Other common symptoms include:

11. Persistent physical symptoms that don’t respond to treatment (headaches, muscle pain, and digestive disorders, for example).
12. Continuous anxiety or uncontrollable worry.
13. Social isolation or withdrawal, not wanting to be around people.
14. Family history of depression, alcoholism, or mental illness.
15. If 18 or younger, increased irritability, persisting complaints of physical problems, agitation, abnormal anxiety or panic, social withdrawal.

Sources:

American Psychiatric Association, *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders - Fourth Edition* (Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Association, 1994).

Grant Mullen, M.D., *Emotionally Free* (Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen Books, 2003), 77-78.