

Your Employee Assistance Program is a support service that can help you take the first step toward change.

If You've Got the Blues

Everyone feels blue occasionally, often when we're a little overworked or when we have received sad or disappointing news. Usually we spring back quickly and get on with our normal lives.

Clinical depression is quite different. It is a medical condition that is very difficult to spring back from without intervention of some kind. The good news is that depression is usually fairly easy to treat. In fact, 80 per cent of people who suffer from depression will recover completely after seeking help. So if you've got the blues but you're not singing, maybe you should be talking!

Signs of Depression

Depression is an illness, not a weakness. If you recognize any of the depression symptoms below, don’t suffer alone. Talk to a doctor or a professional. Here are some reasons to help you get going:

- Feelings of sadness or irritability.
- Loss of interest or pleasure in activities once enjoyed.
- Changes in weight or appetite.
- Changes in sleeping patterns.
- Feelings of guilt, hopelessness or worthlessness.
- Inability to concentrate or make decisions.
- Fatigue or loss of energy.
- Restlessness or decreased activity.
- Physical aches and pains.
- Thoughts of suicide or death.

Number of Symptoms	Durations of Symptoms	What You Should Do
0 to 3	Infrequently, almost a passing mood	Talk to a close friend or family member. Get some exercise. Try to get some playtime. Eat well-balanced meals.
4 to 7	Symptoms last consistently over 2 to 3 weeks	Talk to your family physician or call a professional. Consider making some changes in your life. If possible, try setting some goals for yourself with your needs and happiness in mind.
8 to 10	Symptoms last several weeks or even months	Get help immediately. Call your doctor, or a psychiatrist. If symptoms are severe, drop into the hospital emergency department or an urgent care clinic.

Depression can take a serious toll on almost every aspect of life and on the lives of those around the sufferer. It can be very ingrained, difficult to see past and even physically debilitating. See a health care professional as soon as possible if any of these signs seem all too familiar..
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