

What can I do if I think I'm Depressed?

Talk to an Adult

–Talking to a parent, extended family member, pastor, school staff member, or other trusted adult can help you to identify your feelings and pursue additional help.

Seek Medical Help

–Seeing your family doctor is a good first step. Your doctor can assess your condition, determine whether medication may be helpful and refer you to counseling.

Consider Counseling

–Many people feel better when they talk about their feelings and concerns with a trained professional.

Research has shown that depressed youth and their families can best be helped by using a combination of approaches including therapy, education, medication, and in serious cases, hospitalization.

IF DEPRESSION IS LEFT UNTREATED:

- it may go away by itself, but without help depression is more likely to remain or come back.
- alcohol or other drugs may be used to try to feel better—although use actually makes the person feel worse.
- the risk of suicide increases.

If you or someone you know is thinking or talking about suicide:

- Take it seriously
- Don't try to handle it yourself
- Get adult help immediately

Your school social worker or counselor can help you with additional information and support.

Resources:

Psychology Information Online

<http://www.psychologyinfo.com/depression/teens.htm>

National Institute of Mental Health

<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/>

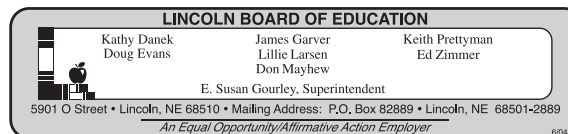
National Mental Health Association

<http://www.nmha.org/infoctr/factsheets/24.cfm>

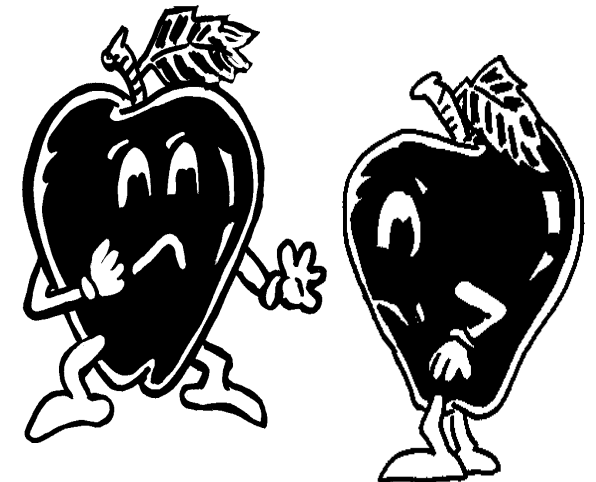
1-800-SUICIDE (1-800-784-2433)

<http://www.suicidehotlines.com/>

This brochure is a resource provided by the LPS School Social Workers... because Families Matter
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DEPRESSION: The Facts for Young People



All people feel sadness sometimes in their lives. This is a normal and healthy emotion. However, when unhappiness lasts for more than two weeks you may be suffering from depression.

Ups and Downs are part of life . . . But depression is different.

Depression is a medical condition and it is not a result of personal weakness.

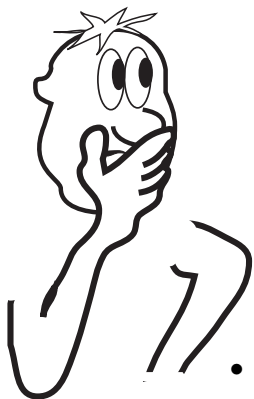
HOW CAN I TELL IF I'M DEPRESSED?

Common signs include:

- Loss of interest in things you like to do
- Lack of energy or feeling restless
- Feeling sad much of the time

OTHER SIGNS:

- Feeling hopeless or crying a lot
- Feeling guilty for no real reason
- Feeling numb, like you have no feelings at all
 - Feeling worthless or "not good enough"
 - Feeling anxious, tense or irritable
 - Feeling angry a lot
 - Worrying a lot
 - Avoiding friends and family—isolating
- Forgetting lots of things/having trouble concentrating
 - Sleeping too much or too little
 - Not caring about how you look
 - Thinking about hurting yourself
- Thinking about death or having thoughts about suicide



- Frequent headaches
- Muscle aches or stomach aches
- Skipping school
- Running away from home

- Dropping Grades
- Drug or alcohol use
- Rebellious Behaviors
- Risky Sexual Behaviors

...may also be signs of depression.

What Causes Depression?

The onset of depression may or may not be linked with a life event. Depression is the result of an imbalance of certain chemicals in the brain. Research shows that depression tends to run in families.

Depression can be triggered by:

- Death of loved one or pet
- Divorce or other family issue
- Relationship break-ups
- Confusion about sexuality
- Moving
- Illness
- Peer problems
- Sexual abuse
- Physical or emotional abuse
- Bullying
- An accumulation of stress and/or loss

