

What are the Causes of Depression?

Depression is a real medical condition that can last as long as months or years, resulting from a variety of genetic, biochemical, environmental, and psychological factors. Research suggests that a family history of depression or a chemical imbalance in the brain may also make a person more likely to develop this disorder.

This condition is associated with depressed mood or reduced interest in everyday activities and can be associated with weight loss and difficulty concentrating. To establish an accurate diagnosis, it is important to tell your health care provider about all of your symptoms.

What are the Symptoms of Depression?

A person with depression has at least 5 of the following symptoms:

- Loss of interest or pleasure
- Depressed mood
- Agitation or restlessness
- Feelings of worthlessness or guilt
- Fatigue or loss of energy
- Trouble making decisions, thinking, or concentrating
- Sleep disturbances, such as insomnia
- Changes in appetite or weight
- Thoughts of death
- Suicide attempts

At least one of the symptoms must be loss of interest, the loss of pleasure, or depressed mood. These symptoms must be present during the same 2-week period and represent a change from previous behavior.

These symptoms can make it difficult for you to function or perform your normal activities or maintain relationships with close friends and acquaintances.

If you are feeling these symptoms, it is very important for you to get the correct diagnosis and a treatment that is appropriate for you.

Tell your health care provider about all of your symptoms and, if you are diagnosed with depression, ask about your various treatment options.