

Recognizing Depression Signs and Self-Assessment Guide

Recognizing Depression Signs

Depression is a common but serious mood disorder that affects how a person feels, thinks, and functions daily. Recognizing its signs early can lead to effective treatment and support.

Common signs and symptoms include:

Persistent sad, anxious, or empty mood

Feelings of hopelessness, pessimism, or worthlessness

Loss of interest or pleasure in hobbies and activities once enjoyed

Fatigue, low energy, or feeling slowed down

Changes in appetite or significant weight loss/gain

Sleep disturbances (insomnia, early waking, or oversleeping)

Difficulty concentrating, making decisions, or remembering

Physical symptoms like headaches, digestive issues, or chronic pain without a clear cause

Thoughts of death, suicide, or self-harm

Increased irritability, restlessness, or agitation

Withdrawal from social activities and isolation

Not everyone experiences all symptoms, but symptoms that impair daily functioning or persist for more than two weeks warrant seeking help.

Depression Self-Assessment (PHQ-9 Based)

Over the last two weeks, how often have you been bothered by any of the following problems?

Please circle the number that best describes how you felt:

0 = Not at all

1 = Several days

2 = More than half the days

3 = Nearly every day

Symptom 0 1 2 3

1. Little interest or pleasure in doing things

2. Feeling down, depressed, or hopeless
3. Trouble falling asleep, staying asleep, or sleeping too much
4. Feeling tired or having little energy
5. Poor appetite or overeating
6. Feeling bad about yourself — or that you are a failure or have let yourself or your family down
7. Trouble concentrating on things, such as reading or watching TV
8. Moving or speaking so slowly that others have noticed or being fidgety/restless
9. Thoughts that you would be better off dead or of hurting yourself

Scoring

Add up the numbers for your answers: Total Score =

Interpretation:

0-4: Minimal or no depression

5-9: Mild depression

10-14: Moderate depression

15-19: Moderately severe depression

20-27: Severe depression

What to Do Next

If scoring 5 or above, consider seeking support from a health care provider.

For scores indicating moderate to severe depression (10 or more), professional evaluation and treatment are strongly recommended.

If you have thoughts of self-harm or suicide (question 9), seek immediate help from a mental health professional or call emergency services.

Remember, this tool is for self-reflection and not a definitive diagnosis. Professional consultation is essential for accurate diagnosis and treatment planning.

If symptoms persist for more than two weeks or worsen, reaching out to a mental health professional can provide support and treatment options.