

# YOU ARE NOT ALONE: Getting Help for Depression

## What is DEPRESSION?

Depression is an illness that affects your mood, body, behavior and mind. Everyone feels sad, irritable or down sometimes. However, you may be experiencing depression if, for two weeks or more, it's hard for you to take care of things at home or work, or you lose interest in activities you used to enjoy.

Depression can make it harder for you to take care of your health and well-being. It can also make it more difficult to manage daily activities and personal responsibilities, like caring for your children or other family members.

## WHO CAN EXPERIENCE DEPRESSION?

Depression can affect anyone.

## HOW CAN YOU MANAGE YOUR DEPRESSION?

- **Find the treatment that is right for you:** You can successfully manage your depression with talk therapy, medication or both. Talk to your health care provider about these treatment options.
- **Practice self-care:** Self-care is an important part of managing depression. Self-care can include eating well, being physically active, getting enough sleep, avoiding drugs and alcohol, making time for fun activities and spending time with people who support you.
- **Connect with social and support services:** Places of worship, immigrant and parent support groups, and other services can help you feel less alone and provide support.





## WHO CAN HELP YOU MANAGE YOUR DEPRESSION?

- **Primary care providers:** They can prescribe medication, connect you to mental health professionals and coordinate your care across different providers.
- **Mental health professionals:** Social workers, psychologists and other kinds of mental health professionals provide therapy and can connect you to benefits and social services. Psychiatrists are medical doctors trained to treat mental illnesses; they can prescribe medication, monitor side effects, provide therapy and consult with the patient's care team.

### TALK THERAPY

- Talk therapy can help you feel better, manage your depression or cope with stress – but it may take time. In talk therapy, you speak to a trained mental health professional about your thoughts, feelings and relationships. There are different kinds of talk therapy. For example:
  - **Cognitive behavioral therapy** can help you identify negative beliefs so you view challenging situations more clearly and can manage stress better.
  - **Interpersonal therapy** can help with relationship challenges that affect your mood.

Both can help you manage depression. Talk to your health care provider about the type of therapy that's best for you.

### MEDICATION THERAPY

- Just as doctors prescribe medication to treat physical illnesses, they can also prescribe medication to treat mental health conditions, such as depression.
- Some people find it helpful to take medicine and go to talk therapy at the same time. The medication can help you feel better so you are able to work on the issues discussed in talk therapy.
- Some medication may have side effects. Your health care provider should talk to you about possible side effects before and during treatment. It is important to decide together if the medication is helping. **Do not stop taking your medication, even if you begin to feel better.** Talk with your health care provider if you have questions about your medication or are thinking about stopping treatment.

## DON'T STRUGGLE ALONE.

Talk to your health care provider or contact NYC Well.

NYC Well is a free and confidential call and messaging service with counselors who respond without judgment and can connect you to ongoing support and care.

 1-888-NYC-WELL  WELL to 65173  [nyc.gov/nycwell](https://nyc.gov/nycwell)