Depression Checklist

Check the boxes that best describe how often over the last 2 weeks you have been bothered by any of the following problems.

Take the checklist with you to your next doctor’s visit.

In the last 14 days (2 weeks), how often have you:

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If you are a woman who has had a baby in the past 12 months, please answer the following questions, too.

10. Felt disconnected from your baby?
11. Felt you can’t care for your baby?
12. Had scary thoughts about your baby?
13. Thought about harming yourself, your baby or others?
14. Saw things or heard voices that aren’t there?
15. Thought you were a bad mother?

Check the boxes that best describe how often over the last 2 weeks you have been bothered by any of the following problems.

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FEELING BETTER

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You Are Not Alone!

Are you, or someone you know, thinking about suicide?
Or are you afraid you might hurt your child or someone else?

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**FEELING BETTER DEPRESSION**

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What Is Depression?
It is more than just a mood.
• Everyone feels down once in a while. But depression is more than a mood. It is an illness that affects both mind and body.
• Depression can change the way you think. It can make normal, everyday activities difficult. It can take the joy out of life.
• Depression is also hard on the body. It can cause headache, joint pain and stomach problems, and make many illnesses more difficult to manage, such as arthritis, diabetes and heart disease.

You don’t have to live with it.
• Depression can be treated! Most people – even those with severe depression – can be helped with counseling, medication or both.
• If you feel sad for more than 2 weeks, or if you lose interest or pleasure in things, make an appointment with your doctor.
• You may find it helpful to fill out the Depression Checklist in this issue, and take it with you to the doctor.
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Handling Depression
Things you can do for yourself:
• Keep clinical appointments, and take medications as prescribed.
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• Make time for enjoyable, relaxing activities.
• Be gentle with yourself. Set realistic goals and take small steps to reach them.
• Delay big decisions, such as quitting your job or dropping out of school, until your depression improves.
• Avoid alcohol and drugs. They can trigger and worsen depression and make recovery more difficult.

Physical activity is powerful!
• Regular physical activity helps prevent and even treat depression. Exercise boosts mood and helps you sleep better.
• Adults should get at least 30 minutes of physical activity (such as brisk walking or biking) at least 5 days a week.
• Children and adolescents need at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day.
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Symptoms of Depression Can Vary
New Mothers
Postpartum depression – more than ‘baby blues’
• Many new mothers get the “baby blues,” mood swings that usually go away in a couple of weeks.
• Some women, however, develop “postpartum depression,” a serious problem that requires treatment and emotional support.
• See the section for new mothers on the Depression Checklist. If you feel guilty, hopeless or sad much of the time – or sometimes think about hurting yourself or your baby – help is available.
• Talk to your doctor or a mental health professional, or call LifeNet (see More Information).

Children and Teens
A little different than adults
• Younger children may be irritable or angry, as well as sad. They may worry a lot, get scared and cry easily or try to hurt themselves.
• Older children and teens may have behavior problems and falling grades. They may become isolated and withdrawn, overly irritable, aggressive or angry, or use alcohol, drugs or tobacco.

Older Adults
Not a normal part of aging
• Many older people with unexplained physical problems – such as headache, fatigue, loss of appetite – actually have depression. When their depression is treated, they feel better physically.
• Older people who are depressed may feel bored, helpless or worthless. They may want to stay home all the time instead of going out and doing things.

Men
Often unrecognized
• Like women, men with depression may feel sad and hopeless. But male depression often goes unrecognized – even by the man who has it.
• Men who have been taught that “men don’t cry” may express depression in other ways. For example:
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Or are you afraid you might hurt your child or someone else?

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Check the boxes that best describe how often over the last 2 weeks you have been bothered by any of the following problems.

In the last 14 days (2 weeks), Not Several More than Nearly
how often have you: at all days half the days every day

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