

What Is Depression?

Depression is more than just sadness. It's a mental health condition where a person feels persistent low mood, hopelessness, lack of energy, and loss of interest in daily life. It affects how you think, feel, and act — and it can happen to anyone.

Why and How Does Depression Start?

Depression can begin due to a combination of factors:

1. Biological Factors:

Chemical imbalance: Low levels of serotonin, dopamine, and norepinephrine in the brain affect mood.

Genetics: If depression runs in your family, you may be more likely to experience it.

Hormonal changes: Postpartum, thyroid issues, or stress hormones (like cortisol) can trigger depression.

2. Psychological Factors:

Negative thinking patterns: Self-criticism, guilt, or low self-worth.

Trauma or early life stress: Childhood abuse, neglect, or emotional pain can lay the foundation.

3. Environmental & Social Factors:

Loneliness or isolation

Chronic stress or toxic work/family environments

Lack of purpose or job dissatisfaction

Loss of a loved one or breakup

Depression often starts gradually. It may begin with tiredness, poor sleep, or less interest in fun things — and then grow deeper over time.

Science Behind Depression

When you're depressed, your brain chemistry and function change:

The prefrontal cortex (decision-making and focus) becomes less active.

The amygdala (emotion center) becomes more reactive — increasing fear and sadness.

Neuroplasticity (brain's ability to adapt) slows down, making it harder to break out of negative habits.

Sleep and appetite-regulating areas become disrupted.

This is why depression affects both emotions and physical energy.

How Depression Affects Daily Life

You may feel exhausted even after sleep.

Everyday tasks feel overwhelming (e.g., brushing your teeth, replying to texts).

You may withdraw from friends or stop doing hobbies you once loved.

Negative thoughts like “I’m not good enough” or “Things will never get better” repeat often.

Physical symptoms may include headaches, stomach problems, or pain.

Your self-care routines break down.

Wellness Tools to Help with Depression

(And the science behind them)

These are non-medical, daily practices that rewire your brain and support healing:

1. Gratitude Journaling

What: Write 3 things you're thankful for every night.

Why it works: Increases dopamine and shifts your focus from negativity to positivity.

How to practice: Use a notebook or app; do it before bed to reflect and feel peace.

Here is the link to download wellness tools

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.northstar.gratitude>

2. Physical Movement (Walks or Exercise)

What: Walk 10,000 steps a day or do 20–30 minutes of activity.

Why it works: Releases endorphins and serotonin; improves energy and reduces stress.

How to practice: Start with 5–10 minutes daily and increase gradually.

Here is the tool to download.

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.google.android.apps.fitness>

3. Mindful Meditation / Deep Breathing

What: 5–10 minutes of sitting quietly, focusing on your breath.

Why it works: Lowers cortisol levels, calms the nervous system, improves emotional control.

How to practice: Use guided meditation apps or sit in silence and breathe deeply.

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.havabee.breathe>

4. Sunlight Exposure

What: Spend 15–20 minutes in natural light.

Why it works: Boosts Vitamin D and regulates sleep–wake cycles, reducing fatigue and low mood.

How to practice: Walk outdoors in the morning or sit near a sunny window.

5. Talking to Someone

What: Share feelings with a trusted friend, therapist, or support group.

Why it works: Talking activates parts of the brain that process emotion and release oxytocin.

How to practice: Schedule regular check-ins or therapy sessions.

6. Limiting Phone & Social Media Use

What: Reduce time spent scrolling.

Why it works: Reduces comparison, distraction, and dopamine crashes.

How to practice: Set screen time limits and engage in offline hobbies.

“You’re not alone in feeling this way. Here’s a helpful video that explains what depression really is, why it happens, and how you can start healing with simple steps. Take a few minutes to watch — it could be your first step toward feeling better.”

<https://youtu.be/xbOpIAtxNuA?si=INi6T-4ajK-3aOI5>

What Happens When You Start Practicing?

At first, you may feel small changes: clearer thoughts, better sleep, or moments of calm. Over weeks, the brain starts forming healthier pathways, creating new habits, and improving your mood and energy. It's not a quick fix — but with consistency, healing begins.

