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HEALTH TOPICS

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Depression

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Sign up for email updates about depression

What is depression?

Everyone feels sad or low sometimes, but these feelings usually pass with time. Depression (also called major depressive disorder or clinical depression) is different. It can cause severe symptoms that affect how you feel, think, and handle daily activities, such as sleeping, eating, or working. It is an illness that can affect anyone—regardless of age, race, income, culture, or education. Research suggests that genetic, biological, environmental, and psychological factors play a role in depression.

Mental Health Minute: Depression



Where can I learn more about depression?



Free health information

Brochures and fact sheets with more information about depression, including signs, symptoms, and treatment options. Available for free in print and online.



Science updates

NIMH news about depression, including press releases and highlights on the latest research findings.



Statistics

Information about the prevalence and treatment of depression in the United States.

Why is NIMH studying depression?

Depression is one of the most common mental disorders in the United States. The symptoms range from mild to severe and can disrupt a person's ability to carry out everyday activities. It is linked to increased health care costs and other health conditions like heart disease and diabetes. It is also a risk factor for suicidal thoughts and behaviors.

How is NIMH research addressing this critical topic?

NIMH is funding and conducting research to learn more about what causes depression, how it affects the brain, and how to treat it effectively. We're working to improve existing treatments like medications, talk therapy (including telehealth and online options), and brain stimulation therapy.

We're investigating ways to identify which treatment will work best for a specific person and tailor treatments based on a person's unique characteristics and traits. We're supporting research to develop and test therapies for people with treatment-resistant depression who don't improve after trying multiple treatment options. We are also exploring new methods to prevent and treat depression and improve the delivery of care for people living with depression.

Explore clinical trials about depression

Clinical trials are research studies that look at new ways to prevent, detect, or treat diseases and conditions. To learn more or find a study, visit:

- [Clinical Trials – Information for Participants](#): Answers to common questions about clinical trials, including why people might take part in a clinical trial and what they can expect
- [Clinicaltrials.gov: Current Studies on Depression](#): List of clinical trials funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) being conducted across the country
- [NIMH Depression Studies for Adults](#): List of studies being conducted on the NIH campus in Bethesda, MD
- [NIMH Depression Studies for Children](#): List of studies being conducted on the NIH campus in Bethesda, MD



Digital shareables

Social media graphics, videos, and resources about depression.

Find help and support

Learn [how to find help](#) for yourself or someone else. You can also [find support](#) and [locate mental health services](#) in your area on the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration website.

If you or someone you know is struggling or having thoughts of suicide, call or text the [988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline](#) at 988 or chat at [988lifeline.org](#). In life-threatening situations, call 911.

Additional federal resources

- [Depression](#) (MedlinePlus): Information, journal articles, and other resources about depression collected by the National Library of Medicine
- [Get Your Teen Screened for Depression](#) (Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion): Information about depression in teens and what to expect from depression screening and treatment
- [Moms' Mental Health Matters: Depression and Anxiety Around Pregnancy](#) (Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development): Information about the signs of depression and anxiety during pregnancy or after birth and how to get help
- [Talk With Your Doctor About Depression](#) (Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion): Information about depression, how to talk to a doctor about mental health concerns, treatment options, and ways to find support
- [Talking Postpartum Depression](#) (Office on Women's Health): Stories from women who experienced postpartum depression and resources to help find support

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Disclaimer

We link to external websites for informational purposes only, but we do not endorse or guarantee their accuracy. Once you leave our site, you will be subject to the new website's privacy policy. Read NIMH's [full external linking policy](#) for more information.

NIMH Resources

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[Información en español](#)

Policies and Notices

[Privacy Policy](#)
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Federal Resources

[National Institutes of Health \(NIH\)](#)
[NIH Virtual Tour](#)
[U.S. Department of Health and Human Services](#)
[USA.gov](#)

The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) is part of NIH, a component of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.