



### REMEMBER

For assistance and connection to appropriate agencies, please speak to your primary care doctor who can also make a referral to a behavioural health consultant. The behavioural health consultant will provide support and guidance in getting you the services you need.

### HELPFUL RESOURCES

Alberta Health Services Addictions Helpline, 24 hour support & information:  
**Toll-free: 1.866.332.2322**

Please talk to your family doctor about PCN services.  
[edmontonsouthsidepcn.ca](http://edmontonsouthsidepcn.ca)



# DEPRESSION

→ *Depression is an illness that affects one in four people over their lifetime. It impacts the way you think, feel and act.*

## SIGNS OF DEPRESSION

- Overwhelming feelings of sadness, grief or guilt
- Feeling of being worthless, helpless or hopeless
- Decreased concentration or memory
- Changes in sleep
- Changes in appetite
- Loss of energy and tiredness
- Thoughts of death or suicide
- Decreased sex drive
- Avoiding other people
- Irritability and agitation

## THINGS THAT MAKE DEPRESSION WORSE

Many things that can make depression worse are often related to:

- Relationship problems
- Job stress
- Death of a family member or a close friend
- Pregnancy/childbirth
- Family history of depression
- Seasonal change
- Chemical imbalance in the brain

## GETTING BETTER

Mild depression may go away within several weeks or months on its own. A major depression may last longer but can be treated. This helps the depression end sooner. A family doctor can help determine the best type of treatment for you based on your individual needs. The doctor can also refer you to a behavioural health consultant for further assessment and support.

If you or someone you know is having thoughts of suicide, speak to your primary care doctor. In case of an emergency, call 911 or go to your nearest emergency department.

## MENTAL HEALTH



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## HELPING YOURSELF

When you feel exhausted, worthless, hopeless and helpless, it may mean you have depression. Some simple things can help overcome the negativity you may feel with depression.

- Work with your doctor. A trusting and honest relationship with a family doctor is very important.
- Take your medication as prescribed. Anti depressant medication can take at least two weeks before you'll notice any changes so don't stop it abruptly. Most side effects will go away after about a week. Tell your doctor about any side effects you may experience.
- Set small attainable goals.
- Let your family and friends help you.
- Take part in activities you enjoy.
- Eat healthy. Your body needs energy to heal even if you don't feel hungry.
- Get physical. Regular exercise can reduce symptoms of depression. Consult your doctor if you haven't exercised in a long time.
- Avoid alcohol and do not take non-prescription drugs unless recommended by your primary care doctor. This may worsen the symptoms of depression and interfere with your medication.
- Limit your caffeine consumption. Caffeine can make you feel anxious and irritable and make it more difficult to sleep.

## HELPFUL RESOURCES

### PHONE HELP

**The Support Network Line**  
(24-hour distress/suicide line)  
780.482.4357 (HELP)

### WEBSITES

**Here to Help**  
[www.heretohelp.bc.ca](http://www.heretohelp.bc.ca)

### BOOKS

***Thoughts and Feelings: Taking Control of Your Moods and Your Life*** by Matthew McKay, Martha Davis and Patrick Fanning

***Freeing Yourself From Anxiety*** by Tamar E. Chansky

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