

# What is Depression?

Someone who suffers from depression is not just having a bad day. Most people have bad days where nothing seems to be going right but then they normally get better. Depression is a serious illness involving intense feelings of sadness and despair that last for more than a few days. Sufferers can feel as if there is no point to anything as it will end badly. Bouts of depression can last for weeks at a time and the sufferer cannot function normally.

Depression can usually be treated, but it is important to seek professional help. Sometimes depression in young people can be an indicator of long term mental health challenges.

If you think you may be suffering from depression, or know a young person who is - **seek professional advice early for the best chance of optimising health.**

## Do you have or does your friend have some of the following symptoms?

- Low self-esteem
- Self-neglect
- Guilt over things that aren't their fault
- Insomnia. Change in sleeping habits, sleeps more
- Change in appetite or weight. Refusal to eat, losing a lot of weight
- Lack of control over emotions
- Lost interest in activities that use to bring happiness
- Lowered pain tolerance
- Lowered concentration and memory
- Lowered energy
- Increased drug and alcohol use
- Talking a lot slower than normal

## Getting help

If you are worried about yourself or others and need help some good places to start are:

### Kids help line

24 hour free and confidential telephone and online counselling services. They will listen to you and will try to help you with what to do and where to go next for help.

**Phone: 1800 55 1800**

**Online: [www.kidshelpline.com.au](http://www.kidshelpline.com.au)**

### Lifeline

24 hour free and confidential telephone counselling service

**Phone: 13 11 14**

Friends and family who want advice can also contact the Lifeline information line between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday. Lifeline can provide information about services in your area and ideas about how to get further help.

**Phone: 1300 13 11 14**

**Online: [www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au)**

### A good friend

Talk to someone you know and trust and get them to help you find out information.

### Your doctor (GP)

Make an appointment with your GP to talk about what you are feeling and experiencing. They are trained to help you and know who else you might benefit from speaking with.

### Your public hospitals

Most public hospitals have emergency departments that are open 24 hours. You should not hesitate to go to the hospital in case of an emergency.