

# UNDERSTANDING DEPRESSION

## INFORMATION ON SYMPTOMS, TREATMENT AND STARTING A CONVERSATION

Depression (or Major Depressive Disorder), is when a person feels sad or flat for weeks, months or years, for no particular reason.

### DEPRESSION SYMPTOMS

Depression symptoms include:

- › difficulty getting motivated
- › no longer enjoying things (previously enjoyable)
- › changes in body weight or sleep routines
- › loss of energy
- › feeling guilty or worthless
- › difficulty thinking or making decisions

### TREATMENT

Although medication is often recommended, other evidence based strategies can include talking therapies, lifestyle changes, exercise, and increased social interaction and support. Speak to your doctor or health professional if you are experiencing persistent symptoms for advice on the most appropriate treatment for you.

### STARTING A CONVERSATION

If you notice that someone isn't acting the way they usually do, it is important to talk with them to make sure they are okay. You can start by saying that you noticed they might be struggling. It is important that you then listen without judgement. Don't try to solve their problems, but offer support. If you feel that they might need additional support, you can offer to help them find support. A good first step is a doctor.

Depression can be debilitating, but it is also a leading cause for suicide - with young people and males at a higher risk. If you feel there might be a risk of self-harm or suicide, it is important not to leave the person alone. Rather stay with him or her and seek urgent medical assistance.

### DO YOU WANT TO FIND OUT MORE?

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