



# Depression

Su Familia: The National Hispanic Family Health Helpline 1-866-SU-FAMILIA (1-866-783-2645)

## What is Depression



Depression affects the body, mood, and thoughts. It can affect the way you feel about others and oneself. If left untreated it may affect work, family, eating habits, sleep, and life in general. Depression is not something that can be ignored and left to go away with time. Symptoms may become worse as time persists. It is important to seek treatment, as most people are able to lead full lives once they start treatment.

Someone suffering from depression has feelings of hopelessness and despair that can interfere with many aspects of life and may affect hobbies or activities that were once enjoyable. Depression may occur once in someone's life, however it is common for it to occur several times.

## What are the Symptoms



You may experience five or more of the following for at least a two week period:

- Persistent sadness, pessimism
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, helplessness, or hopelessness
- Loss of interest or pleasure in usual activities, including sex
- Difficulty concentrating and complaints of poor memory
- Worsening of coexisting chronic diseases, such as diabetes
- Change in sleeping habits (insomnia or oversleeping)
- Change in eating habits (unintended weight gain or loss)
- Fatigue, lack of energy
- Anxiety, agitation, irritability
- Thoughts of suicide or death
- Slow speech; slow movements
- Headache, stomachache, and digestive problems



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## What is Dysthymia



Dysthymia is a milder form of depression, but the symptoms last longer, sometimes years. People who have dysthymia can function normally usually but are always unhappy. It is common for them to also experience major depression and go back and forth, which is called – double depression.

## What are the Symptoms of Dysthymia



- Difficulty sleeping
- Unable to have fun or loss of interest in normal activities
- Excessively feeling guilt or worthlessness
- Fatigue
- Problems concentrating, thinking or making decisions
- Suicidal thoughts

## What is Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)



It is a depression that happens at the same time each year, usually during the fall or winter months. There is also a more rare type, which occurs in the early summer and ends in the fall. These are not the normal blues, because they persist over time. The symptoms of winter and summer sad are different, although they are similar to those of depression.



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## What are the Symptoms of Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)



Winter:

- Fatigue
- Increased need for sleep
- Decreased energy level
- Weight gain
- Increased appetite
- Problems concentrating
- Desire to be alone

Summer

- Weight loss
- Trouble sleeping
- Decreased appetite

## What are the Treatments for Depression



A combination of medication and psychotherapy is the most successful treatment. There are different types of medications available depending on the case and how the patient responds. Psychotherapy is often used in conjunction with medication. The therapist helps to detect emotional patterns and the triggers of episodes. The therapist will help to manage the illness and coping. During episodes of major depression doctors will sometimes use electroconvulsive therapy for those that are suicidal or for whom medication has not been useful.



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## Resources



### **National Alliance for Hispanic Health**

#### **Su Familia: National Hispanic Family Health Helpline**

1 (866) SU-FAMILIA or 1 (866) 783-2645

<http://www.hispanichealth.org>

### **National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)**

1-866-615-NIMH (6464)

<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/>

### **Medline Plus**

1-888-FIND-NLM or 1-888-346-3656

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus>

### **Mayo Clinic**

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/>

### **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration**

<http://www.samhsa.gov/>