

The Blues or Depression

Everyone gets “the blues”, from time to time. They can last several days or longer. When “the blues” start impacting your sleep, work and/or relationships, it’s time to give it more serious attention.

Symptoms of depression may include:

- Feelings of sadness, tearfulness, emptiness or hopelessness
- Angry outbursts, irritability or frustration, even over small matters
- Loss of interest or pleasure in most or all normal activities, such as sex, hobbies or sports
- Sleep disturbances, including insomnia or sleeping too much
- Tiredness and lack of energy, so even small tasks take extra effort
- Changes in appetite — often reduced appetite and weight loss, but increased cravings for food and weight gain in some people
- Anxiety, agitation or restlessness
- Slowed thinking, speaking or body movements
- Feelings of worthlessness or guilt, fixating on past failures or blaming yourself for things that aren’t your responsibility
- Trouble thinking, concentrating, making decisions and remembering things
- Frequent or recurrent thoughts of death, suicidal thoughts, suicide attempts or suicide
- Unexplained physical problems, such as back pain or headaches

For many people when depression becomes a challenge, symptoms usually are severe enough to cause noticeable problems in day-to-day activities, such as work, school, social activities or relationships with others. Other people may feel generally miserable or unhappy without really knowing why. That is the time to make real steps to create change.

If you think you are struggling with depression:

1. Realize it’s has a lot to do with body chemistry. Depression is often caused by stress that the body can no longer manage well. Realize there is no shame in depression; it’s similar to having a broken arm. The goal is to discover how to pursue the healing that your body requires.
2. Depression can also be caused by emotional hurts, present or past. And hurts from the past if “pushed down” will eventually come out. Often forgiveness and releasing offenders can provide a breakthrough. Forgiving others, God and ourselves is important. Consider early childhood hurts, parents, siblings and friends as source of hurts. You can obtain inner healing from those experiences. If these are significant in your life locate people who can minister to you at this level. Locate people experienced with “inner healing ministry”.
3. Tell someone you trust if you think you are experiencing depression. What you keep in the “dark” festers; what you bring to the “light” heals.
4. Surround yourself with caring people who will encourage, pray and support you.
5. Spend extra time “soaking” in God’s presence. Receive all of his love, care and acceptance.
6. Eat healthy, change a few habits as needed. Avoid sugar and high carb foods.
7. Increase physical activity, find something fun to do.
8. Get a hobby, invest in something that you enjoy.
9. Protect your Sabbath and family time. Focus on refreshing and life giving relationships.
10. Focus on your “self-talk”, what are you saying to yourself? Focus on your identity in Christ, what does the word say about who you are? Discover “lies” and negative thoughts that you may be telling yourself. Find “truth” in God’s word, promises you can meditate on, even memorize.
11. Try nutrients from a health food store, they have specific nutrients that help with depression.
12. If it continues, consider get a medical physical, there could be a medical cause (thyroid etc).
13. Counseling can also be a great help to give you an objective view point. Consider counseling when you are working through deeper and/or longer lasting challenges.
14. With sever depression, sometimes meds for a short term are helpful, discuss it with your doctor. There is no shame with meds when it’s your last resort to bring your body’s chemicals back into balance. The sooner you get treatment the sooner you’ll enjoy life again.