



Signs of Depression Checklist

Everyone gets down from time to time, but sometimes it's more than just "the blues." Sometimes, it can be clinical depression. Clinical depression affects more than 19 million Americans each year. It is a real illness that can be treated effectively. Unfortunately, fewer than half of the people who have this illness seek treatment.

Too many people believe that it is a "normal" part of life and that they can treat it themselves. Left untreated, depression poses a huge burden on employees and employers. It causes unnecessary suffering and disruption in one's life and work, and costs about \$44 billion a year in lost workdays, decreased productivity and other losses.



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KNOW THE SIGNS

The signs and symptoms of clinical depression are:

- Persistent sad, anxious or "empty" mood
- Changes in sleep patterns
- Reduce appetite and weight loss, or increased appetite and weight gain
- Loss of pleasure and interest in once-enjoyable activities.
- Restlessness, irritability
- Persistent physical symptoms that do not respond to treatment, such as chronic pain or digestive disorders
- Difficulty concentrating at work or at school, or difficulty remembering things or making decisions
- Fatigue or loss of energy
- Feeling guilty, hopeless or worthless
- Thoughts of suicide or death

If you experience five or more of these symptoms for two weeks or longer, you could have clinical depression. See a doctor or qualified mental health professional for help, right away.

If you are supervising an employee who exhibits any of these symptoms and has frequent, unexcused absences, discuss the situation with the individual, but do not try to diagnose the problem. Suggest that the employee seek help from his or her doctor or, if you have one, the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). Make sure the employee knows that seeking help is the healthy thing to do.

For more information, contact your local Mental Health Association or the National Mental Health Association at 800-969-NMHA (6642), or visit www.nmha.org