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# MOSAIC MENTAL HEALTH TIPS

THE OFFICIAL EAP NEWSLETTER FROM MOSAIC COUNSELING

## HOW TO IDENTIFY SIGNS OF DEPRESSION IN SOMEONE YOU LOVE

BY SUMMIT HEALTH - [HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/C2EEAECV](https://tinyurl.com/c2eeaecv)

Everyone has bad days or feels down at times, but clinical depression is a serious mood disorder that can have a major impact on someone's life and those around them. If you or someone you love suffers from depression, it is important to know that there is help and treatment available.

Many people hide feelings of depression, are in denial of the impact the symptoms are having on them, or are not even aware they are suffering from depression. This can make it difficult to recognize the condition in a friend, family member, coworker, or even yourself. Summit Health's James Korman, PsyD, ACT, chief of behavioral health at Summit Health, explains how to pick up on the warning signs of depression and what you can do to help.

### What is clinical depression?

"Some of the symptoms someone with major depression may experience include sadness, depressed mood, tearfulness, emptiness, hopelessness, and anhedonia, which is the inability to experience pleasure," explained Dr. Korman. "Additional symptoms of depression may involve weight gain, weight loss, excessive or lack of sleep, inappropriate excessive guilt, and worthlessness."



If you have these symptoms for a span of two weeks, you may be suffering from a major depressive disorder. Major depression can be mild, moderate, or severe. People may still be able to function with mild and moderate depression, but in most cases, a person may find the symptoms are negatively impacting their family, social, and work lives.

"When it comes to trying to determine if somebody suffers from depression, it's not always easy for the average person to notice — people can put on a pretty good face when they're out in public so they can get away with not appearing outwardly depressed," said Dr. Korman.

### How to spot signs of depression

Depression is more evident when it's in the home or to those close to the person suffering. Family members or friends can usually see that there's a serious problem when their loved one:

- Has a marked change in their behavior
- Exhibits sadness
- Loses enjoyment
- Exhibits risky behaviors
- Disengages from hobbies
- Becomes easily agitated
- Starts isolating themselves
- Complains frequently of feeling physically ill

When a depressed person is planning on taking their own life, there may be potential warning signs. The individual may begin giving away their belongings and appear to magically swing from being depressed to being very happy.

"It's important to know that death is not the goal of suicide, but a person commits suicide to escape the pain they are feeling," said Dr. Korman. "When I work with people who are suicidal, it's not that they want to die. They don't want to feel bad anymore and they don't feel that they have any other options."

If you or someone you know is at risk for suicide, call or text the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline at 988 or go to the hospital emergency room near you for help immediately.



### The dangers of untreated depression

When depression is treated, the likelihood of suicide decreases greatly. If left untreated, one of the major consequences of depression can be death at the person's own hand.

"We do know that women are twice as likely as men to attempt suicide but are less likely to accomplish it. The reason for this is because women often use less lethal means like pills or cut themselves, which gives them time to change their minds and get help," said Dr. Korman. "Men often rely on more lethal methods such as guns, which often, unfortunately, is successful with the initial attempt."

### Signs of depression in the workplace

In the workplace if a person is disengaged, not performing their job well, or calling in sick frequently they might be exhibiting signs of depression. In addition, if a person begins seeing the doctor frequently with aches and pains that don't seem to have a medical cause, they should be screened for depression.

### How to approach someone with depression

If you sense that someone might be depressed, what's the best way to approach them? Dr. Korman advises that being direct is the best option. "If you are concerned that somebody might be depressed, ask them directly: "Listen, I've noticed that you don't seem to be as happy anymore. You seem sad and you're not as engaged as you once were. What's going on?"

Talking is a good first step. Next, recommend that the person who is suffering from depression see their primary care physician or make an appointment with a mental health professional. Depression is a very treatable disorder and talking to a professional can help.

## “Depression is highly treatable”

### Treatment options

It is important to know that treatment options are available, and they have been found to be extremely effective in helping people manage depression.

Before prescribing medication, cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) is considered the first-line treatment for mild to moderate depression. "CBT focuses on correcting the negative thoughts and ideas that people suffering from depression often have. The goal is to repair their negative self-worth and view of the world by giving them the tools to modify their behavior, negative ideas, thoughts, and perceptions, with the goal of reducing and eliminating symptoms," explained Dr. Korman.

If you or someone you know is hesitant about going to therapy, you can make an appointment with a primary care physician first. They can help guide you with a diagnosis and recommend treatment or next steps. Depression can also be treated with medications or a combination of medication and therapy. Your doctor will work closely with you to find a medication that works best for you.

### Your Mosaic Counseling EAP can help you

If you think you may have depression, do not suffer in silence. Depression is highly treatable. Call Mosaic Counseling to be referred to a matched therapist to begin your treatment. And if you or someone you know is at risk for suicide, call or text the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline at 988, see your doctor, or walk right into a hospital emergency room near you for help immediately. 