

If You're Feeling Depressed...

Treatment Brings New Hope

Carole and Ronald Krist Samaritan Center for Counseling and Education

Depression is a whole body disorder.

Depression. The darkest moods. Feeling down, empty. Difficulty remembering. Many things just don't interest you any more. Aches and pains that keep coming back. Depression that goes on and on for weeks and months is called clinical depression.

Most people think of depression only as sadness and low mood, but clinical depression is far more than ordinary "down" moods everyone experiences now and then, and which pass after a visit with a friend or a good movie.

Depression is also more than a feeling of grief after losing someone you love. Following such a loss, for many people, a depressed mood is a normal reaction to grief. And these people may find it helpful to join a grief support group to talk with others experiencing similar feelings. However, when a depressed mood continues for some time, whether following a particular event or for no apparent reason, the person may be suffering from clinical depression—an illness that can be treated effectively.

Clinical depression is a whole body disorder. It can affect the way you think and the way you feel, both physically and emotionally. But there is good news. Nearly 80 percent of people with clinical depression can be treated successfully with medications, psychotherapy or a combination of both. Even the most serious depressions usually respond rapidly to the right treatment. But first depression has to be recognized.

A Depression Checklist

Check any symptoms experienced for more than two weeks. If four or more of the symptoms for depression have been checked, contact the Krist Samaritan Center for treatment.

- A persistent sad, anxious, or "empty" mood
- Loss of interest or pleasure in ordinary activities, including sex
- Decreased energy, fatigue, feeling "slowed down"
- Sleep problems (insomnia, oversleeping, early morning waking)
- Eating problems (loss of appetite or weight, weight gain)
- Difficulty concentrating, remembering or making decisions
- Feelings of hopelessness or pessimism
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness or helplessness
- Thoughts of death or suicide or a suicide attempt
- Irritability
- Excessive crying
- Recurring aches and pains that don't respond to treatment

If someone has recently experienced a loss, these feelings may be part of the normal grief reaction. But, if the feelings persist with no lifting mood, the person may need professional treatment.



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