



Depression



Overview

Everyone feels sad sometimes. But if deep sadness and hopelessness makes your daily life hard, you may be depressed. Depression can last for a long time. You may have depression many times throughout your life.

Causes and Risk Factors

We aren't sure what causes depression. It may be linked to brain chemistry. Hormones, genetics and other things may play a role. Your risk is higher if you have low self-esteem. It's higher if you abuse alcohol or drugs, or if bad things have happened in your life. Your risk is higher if you have a serious illness. It's higher if you take certain medications, and if you have other mental health issues.

Symptoms

Depression can make you feel sad, hopeless, and empty. You may feel guilty. You may have a short temper. You may not be able to think clearly. You may lose interest in things you used to enjoy. You may have trouble sleeping and you may have no energy. You may eat more or less than normal. You may have aches and pains for no reason. And you may think about suicide or death.

Treatment

Depression can be treated with medications and counseling. If your depression is severe, you may need to be cared for in a hospital. For some people, a series of brain treatments using electrical or magnetic stimulation may be used. Your healthcare provider can create a care plan that is right for your needs.

Actor portrayals in photos

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