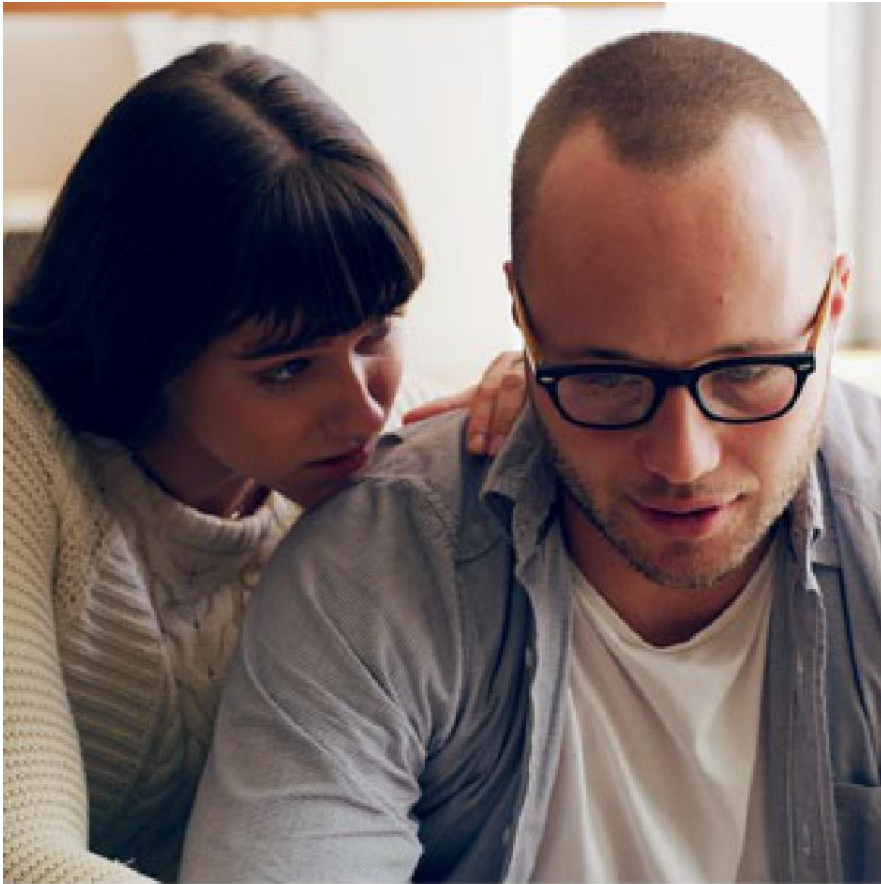




Talking to Your Doctor About Depression



Overview

If you feel sad and hopeless, and these feelings won't go away, you may have depression. Depression is a real illness. For most people, it doesn't get better on its own. But it can get better with treatment. You may not feel comfortable telling your doctor you are depressed. But the truth is, it's probably easier than you think. Just follow these steps.

Make an appointment

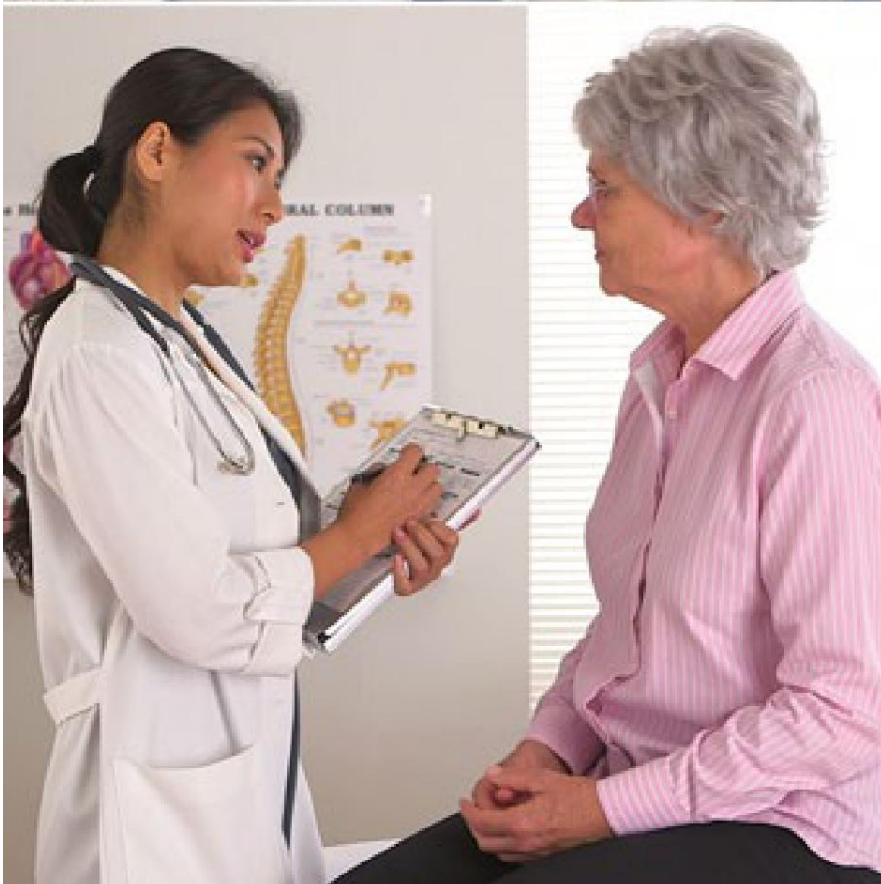
First, make an appointment. Just pick up the phone and call your doctor's office. Say "I haven't been myself lately, and I'd like to talk to a doctor about it." Or, say "I think I might have depression, and I'd like some help." That's all it takes to start the process.

Prepare

Now, do a little preparation. Write down any symptoms you've had recently. Depression can cause a many symptoms, so list everything that doesn't seem normal for you. When did your symptoms start? How severe are they? Have you had them before? Have you ever been treated? Write down any recent life changes and things that cause you stress. And, list any medications you take.

Bring support

Finally, when it's time for your appointment, bring your list. And consider bringing a family member or a close friend for support. For many people, support is very helpful. At your visit, your doctor will examine you and talk with you about how you're feeling. You may have some lab tests to rule out other medical conditions. And, you may be sent to see a mental health professional. Follow your doctor's advice so you can get the care you need.



Actor portrayals in photos

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