

What are the main symptoms of depression?

Physical:

- Fatigue or loss of energy;
- Sleep problems;
- Decrease or increase in appetite leading to weight loss or weight gain;
- Loss of interest in sex;
- Agitation or slowed body movements;
- Headache, backache or stomach pain.

Psychological:

- Depressed mood, feeling distressed;
- Loss of interest in activities;
- Feelings of worthlessness or heavy guilt;
- Low self-esteem;
- Trouble concentrating and making decisions;
- Difficulty carrying out responsibilities;
- Inability to function normally;
- Suicidal thoughts.

A diagnosis of depression is made based on the duration, number and severity of the symptoms. They must be present most of the time, for at least two consecutive weeks.

WARNING!

Some symptoms of depression, such as fatigue, sleep problems, changes in appetite, or headache, can be confused with poorly controlled diabetes.

Questions about diabetes?

InfoDiabetes Service

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Diabetes School

Universi D

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Depression and Diabetes



What is depression?

Depression is a mental illness characterized by a loss of pleasure and a persistent feeling of sadness that disrupts a person's normal functioning (personal, familial and social).

Depression is not:

- Normal sadness in response to an upsetting event, such as a romantic breakup;
- A reaction to bereavement;
- A moral defect or laziness;
- A weakness of character.

Fortunately, depression is treatable, hence the importance of knowing how to recognize it.



What is the link between depression and diabetes?

Depression and diabetes are two conditions that affect each other.

People with depression tend to be more sedentary, eat less healthily, put on extra weight and be more stressed—all risk factors for developing type 2 diabetes.

People with diabetes are at higher risk of becoming depressed because:

- The demands of managing diabetes can be overwhelming and cause distress.
- The treatment can cause stress and anxiety.
- The stigma associated with diabetes can lead to various negative emotions, such as self-esteem problems, guilt, shame or embarrassment.

What are the risk factors for depression for people with diabetes?

- Being of the female sex;
- Being a teen, a young adult or elderly;
- Poverty and lack of social support;
- Stressful life events;
- Trouble controlling their blood sugar;
- Having had diabetes for a long time;
- Presence of long-term complications.

What are the consequences of depression for people with diabetes?

- Decreased participation in diabetes self-care;
- Decreased quality of life;
- Increased risk of complications;
- Higher risk of cardiovascular disease;
- Lower effectiveness of the body’s immune system;
- Sedentary lifestyle;
- Psychological stress;
- Lower life expectancy;
- Suicide.

How is depression treated?

Once it is diagnosed, depression is treated with psychotherapy, medication or a combination of both. There are several drugs used to treat depression, so it is normal for it to take some time before you find the right drug for you and feel its full effect.

The sooner you consult a professional, the sooner you will be able to regain control of your life and your disease.

If you plan to use natural health products, talk to your doctor or pharmacist first, because some of these products may interact with your medication.

Take action to take care of your mental health!

Here are some mental-health strategies:

Professional help

See a social worker, psychologist or psychotherapist.

A healthy diet

Opt for a more balanced diet. Reduce your consumption of stimulants, such as coffee, tea, chocolate, soft drinks and energy drinks.

Exercise

Get physically active, at your own pace and on a regular basis. Get out of the house and spend time in nature, if possible.

Sleep

Organize your schedule to ensure that you get enough hours of restorative sleep.

Recreation and fun

Take time out for yourself by doing activities that you find relaxing and enjoyable: meditation, gardening, reading, going on outings, playing games, watching a movie, listening to music, etc.

Social support

Talk about your negative emotions and problems with people you trust. Make the most of the personal relationships that make you feel good.



Resources

Psychosocial support available from your CLSC

Psychosocial help and services available from several CEGEPs and universities

Association québécoise de prévention du suicide
suicide.ca/en
1-866-277-3553

Helplines by region
lignedecoute.ca

Info-Social
811 press 2

Tel-Jeunes Parents
teljeunes.com/en/parents
1-800-361-5085

Mouvement santé mentale Québec
mouvementsmq.ca

Ordre des psychologues du Québec
ordrepsy.qc.ca

The employee assistance program provided by your employer

Relief – A Quebec association offering support services to people living with anxiety, depression or bipolarity
relief.ca

Tel-Jeunes
teljeunes.com/en
1-800-263-2266

If you are in imminent danger, go directly to the emergency room or call 911.