Is this all there is? What's the point? Why can't things stay the same? I just can't do it all...

THE FACE OF DEPRESSION
BY AGE

Depression doesn't always look like you might expect. It can take on different appearances at different times in life. Here's our guide to recognizing signs of depression at each life stage.

12
CHILDREN
Depression is not common in children.

TRIGGERS
• Domestic violence, parental depression, other family stressors
• Learning problems

SIGNS
• Problems in school
• Loss of interest in fun
• Difficulties with parents, siblings

HOW TO HELP
Talk to professionals:
• Child's primary care doctor
• Family counselor
• Teacher, school counselor

12-18
TEENS/ADOLESCENTS
Some mood swings are part of normal behavior.

TRIGGERS
• Difficulties in school
• Pressure to perform
• Rejection by peers
• Lack of sleep

SIGNS
• Mood changes longer than a few weeks
• Problems at school, home, with friends
• Unusual levels of irritability and lashing out

HOW TO HELP
• Have a talk in a low-pressure environment – on a walk or drive
• Encourage teen to confide in others – teacher or friend
• Make apt to with primary care doctor

19-29
YOUNG ADULTS
This stage of life can be a trigger for depression.

TRIGGERS
• Major life transition
• Lack of support in new environment
• Lack of coping skills

SIGNS
• Mood changes longer than a few weeks
• Problems at school or work
• Withdrawal, hopelessness
• Drug or alcohol abuse

HOW TO HELP
• Prepare them for transition
• Help build a support system
• Stay connected
• Get contact info for a good friend

30-60
ADULTS
Depression can strike at any age and is rising in baby boomers.

TRIGGERS
• Lots of responsibilities – no relief
• Social isolation

SIGNS
• Mood changes longer than a few weeks
• Problems at work, home, socially
• Withdrawal, hopelessness
• Drug or alcohol abuse

HOW TO HELP
• Listen to concerns
• Suggest visit with primary care doctor
• Encourage balance and self care

60+
SENIOR ADULTS
A quarter of people 65 and older suffer from depression.

TRIGGERS
• Social isolation
• Major life losses
• Physical illness
• Medications

SIGNS
• May be physical complaints, not sadness
• Mood changes that don’t let up (grief fluctuates)
• Problems in concentration

HOW TO HELP
• Listen to concerns
• Suggest visit with primary care doctor
• Create ways to socialize

ALL AGES
Seeing a primary care physician (PCP) can lessen the stigma of depression. PCPs now routinely screen for depression in office visits. Medications may be useful but are not always necessary. Many solutions are available.

Created in partnership with
Meg Durbin, MD, adult and pediatric primary care expert with Palo Alto Medical Foundation

Sutter Health