

Depression

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Am I just sad, down, feeling blue or am I depressed? And what does it mean when I hear that someone is suffering from depression, anyway?

If we haven't already, at some time in our lives we will experience some event that will cause us to feel down or sad. The death of a pet, a loved one, the end of a relationship, saying goodbye to close friends/family, and a cancer diagnosis are just a few common circumstances that people face. It would be normal to feel down, sad, blah, even depressed, in these situations. Many people are able to manage these feelings, but some have such difficulty that it begins to affect daily living. One may then enter into the realm of "clinical depression." According to the DSM-IV, the diagnostic manual from the American Psychiatric Association, you have MAJOR DEPRESSIVE DISORDER if:

- You have an episode of depression lasting at least two weeks with at least five of the following symptoms:
 1. You are depressed, sad, blue, prone to tears.
 2. You have lost interest or pleasure in things you previously enjoyed.
 3. Your appetite is much less or much greater than usual and you have lost or gained weight.
 4. You have a lot of trouble sleeping or sleep too much.
 5. You are so agitated, restless, or sluggish that others have begun to notice.
 6. You are tired and have no energy.
 7. You feel worthless or excessively guilty about things you have done or not done.
 8. You have trouble concentrating, thinking clearly or making decisions.
 9. You feel you would be better off dead or have thoughts about killing yourself.
- These symptoms are severe enough to upset your daily routine, seriously impair your work or interfere with your relationships.
- The depression does not have a specific cause like alcohol, drugs, medication side effect or physical illness.
- Your depression is not just a normal reaction to the death of a loved one.

Not all depression is caused by situations or circumstances in life. In some individuals, depression can arise for apparently no rhyme or reason. While the symptoms are similar to situational depression, in these cases a chemical imbalance may be the cause of the depression. Regardless of the cause, the good news is that people do not have to live with depression. Research has shown that talk therapy or a combination of anti-depressant medications and therapy can make a huge difference.

How can Arbor help? Arbor clinicians are trained and experienced in providing the most effective approaches to treating depression. The following are some of the more commonly used treatment options:

- Cognitive therapy
- Behavioral therapy
- Dialectical behavioral therapy
- Psychodynamic therapy
- Interpersonal therapy
- Medication
- Meditation

More importantly, we do not use a “cookbook“ approach. Each person is an individual and the strategies utilized will be specific to that individual.