

# VitaMin

Vital health information in a minute

## MORE THAN A MOOD Watch for warning signs of depression

Everyone feels down sometimes. You might be coping with everyday stress, feeling lonely or grieving the loss of a loved one. But how do you know if you're just feeling blue or on the brink of a major depression?

The signs of depression are hard to detect, and might go unnoticed by you or others who are close to you. Depression can hide behind a person's smiling photos posted on social media. It can be a constant drain on someone who appears otherwise happy and functioning in their career.

### Diagnosing depression

If you're concerned about depression, talking with your doctor is a good first step. Your doctor might ask questions about your symptoms and discuss any family history of depression or mental illness. Lab tests may help rule out other conditions that could be affecting your mood.<sup>1</sup>

The following questions can help uncover symptoms of depression.<sup>1</sup>

- Do you feel sad most of the day or almost every day?
- Have you lost interest in your favorite hobbies and activities?
- Have you had a change in appetite or significant weight gain or loss?

- Are you sleeping too much or unable to sleep?
- Do you lack energy and motivation almost every day?
- Do you feel hopeless, worthless or guilty almost every day?
- Do you have problems with concentrating, making decisions or remembering?
- Do you have recurring thoughts of death or suicide?

### Let's talk

There's no need to suffer in silence or hide your feelings. Reaching out to set up an appointment can take just a few words: "I don't feel like myself lately, and I wonder if it could be depression or something else. I'd like to talk with a doctor about it."

If you need help right now, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at **800-273-8255**.

### Source:

1. WebMD. "Depression Diagnosis." <https://www.webmd.com/depression/guide/depression-diagnosis#1> (last reviewed/updated April 16, 2018).

This is general health information and not medical advice or services. Always consult with your doctor for appropriate examinations, treatment, testing, and health care recommendations.

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