

Depression

Helping Someone with Depression

Everyone occasionally feels blue or sad. But these feelings are usually short-lived and pass within a couple of days. When you have depression, it interferes with daily life and causes pain for both you and those who care about you. Depression is a common illness that can be serious.

Many people with a depressive illness never seek treatment. But the majority, even those with the most severe depression, can get better with treatment. Medications, psychotherapies, and other methods can effectively treat people with depression. The earlier that treatment can begin, the more effective it is.

If you know someone who is depressed, the most important thing you can do is help your friend or relative get a diagnosis and treatment. You may need to make an appointment and go with him or her to see the doctor. Encourage your loved one to stay in treatment, or to seek different treatment if no improvement occurs after 6 to 8 weeks.

How to help your friend or relative:

- ◆ Offer emotional support, understanding, patience, and encouragement.
- ◆ Talk to him or her, and listen carefully.
- ◆ Never dismiss feelings, but point out realities and offer hope.
- ◆ Never ignore comments about suicide, and report them to your loved one's therapist or doctor.
- ◆ Invite your loved one out for walks, outings, and other activities. Keep trying if he or she declines, but don't push him or her to take on too much too soon.
- ◆ Provide assistance in getting to the doctor's appointments.

This quarter's theme is depression.

**We welcome your feedback at
ask@lifesolutionsforyou.com.**

- ◆ Remind your loved one that with time and treatment, the depression will lift.

According to a survey conducted by Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index from January 2, 2011 to December 30, 2012, about 12 percent of U.S. workers have been diagnosed with depression at some point in their lifetime. Women experience depression twice as often as men.¹ Depression often coexists with medical illnesses such as heart disease, obesity, stroke, and sleep disorders.²

Need more support or advice? Contact *LifeSolutions* to speak confidentially with a care manager about your concerns.

Source: *Depression booklet by National Institute of Mental Health. www.nimh.nih.gov*

1. Kessler RC, Berglund P, Demler O, Jin R, Koretz D, Merikangas KR, Rush AJ, Walters EE, Wang PS. The epidemiology of major depressive disorder: results from the National Comorbidity Survey Replication (NCS-R). *Journal of the American Medical Association. 2003; 289(3): 3095-3105*
2. Cassano P, Fava M. Depression and public health, an overview. *Journal of Psychosomatic Research. 2002 Oct; 53(4): 849-857*

DidUKnow?

Not everyone who is diagnosed with depression experiences the same symptoms. The symptoms can vary in severity, frequency, and duration of symptoms. The signs and symptoms of depression include:

- ◆ Agitation, restlessness, irritability, and anger
- ◆ Becoming withdrawn or isolated
- ◆ Fatigue and lack of energy
- ◆ Loss of interest or pleasure in activities that were once enjoyed
- ◆ Sudden change in appetite, often with weight gain or loss
- ◆ Thoughts of death or suicide
- ◆ Trouble concentrating
- ◆ Trouble sleeping or sleeping too much

Source: U.S. National Library of Medicine — The World's Largest Medical Library. www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov

Beating the Blues US

LifeSolutions has a new online tool you can use to help you make positive changes in your thinking ... your mood ... your confidence ... and your life. This online tool is called *Beating the Blues US*. It is based on the fact that, by learning some very useful skills, you can actually change the way you feel about — and react to — the things that you may now find overwhelming or stressful.

Beating the Blues was developed in the U.K., validated with over ten years of research and utilized all over the world. It is designed for those coping with anxiety, depression or other stress-related issues. This free, eight-session, online self-help program provides evidence-based assistance based on cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT). It shows participants that thinking impacts feelings and behavior. The program helps people change the way they think so that they can improve how they feel.

Highlights of the program:

- ◆ Engaging, interactive, and user-friendly
- ◆ Accessible via a secure website 24/7
- ◆ Eight online sessions — preferably done at the rate of one session per week
- ◆ Teaches practical, lifelong skills
- ◆ Structured activities to build skills that help participants feel better and keep feeling better
- ◆ Participants progress at their own rate and on their own schedule
- ◆ Encourages completion of homework assignments designed to transfer what's learned to the real world
- ◆ Users can review completed sessions and print off session summaries to use as reminders and tip sheets for how to respond

Beating the Blues is a voluntary program — you are not required to participate. Also, it does not take the place of seeing a doctor or behavioral health specialist if you need those services. The program is confidential.

How the program works:

- ◆ Each participant is enrolled in the program by a "helper." The helper will know if the participant completes a module, but will have no access to the module itself. The helper will contact the participant several times throughout the program to support progress and address any problems that may occur.
- ◆ After completing a module, the participant receives regular email reminders when it is time to begin another session. He or she continues to complete one module a week for a total of eight weeks.



- ◆ The participant can call his or her *LifeSolutions* helper at any time for assistance with any issues getting in the way of using the program.
- ◆ The participant prints session information designed to help him or her continue to use skills being developed in the session. He or she has access to the program for a period of one year after the activation date.
- ◆ After completing the last module, the helper will contact the participant by telephone to get his or her opinion about the program and have the person complete an online feedback questionnaire.

If you are interested or you think someone in your household could benefit from the program, call *LifeSolutions* at 1-800-647-3327 and ask to participate in *Beating the Blues*.

To use our *WorkLife* Resource Center, email or call us for your company code:
ask@lifesolutionsforyou.com

1.800.647.3327

www.lifesolutionsforyou.com

LifeSolutions is a confidential workplace benefit available at no cost to you and members of your household.



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