



# Depression is more than just a rough patch

Depression is a serious but treatable disorder. It is a biological, medical condition. It is not caused by personal weakness and is not a character defect. If you have depression, there may be problems with activity levels in certain parts of your brain and chemicals in your brain called neurotransmitters being out of balance.

## Depression is on the rise

The pandemic has contributed to an increase in depression with the percentage of adults reporting anxiety or depression rising 11% to 41.1% from January – June 2019 compared to January 2021.

Most experts believe that a combination of genetics and stressful life events can cause depression. Life events can include a death in the family or a long-term health problem. People can also become depressed even if there is no apparent reason for it. Childhood experiences such as abuse also contribute to vulnerability to depression.

## Symptoms of depression

Symptoms of depression can be difficult to notice at first. They vary from person to person and can be confused with another health problem or not feeling like your normal self.

The two most common symptoms of depression are:

1. Feeling sad or hopeless nearly every day for at least two weeks.
2. Losing interest in, or not getting pleasure from, most of the daily activities you used to enjoy and feeling this way almost every day for at least two weeks.

A serious symptom of depression is thinking about death or suicide. If you or someone you care about is talking about it or feeling hopeless, get help right away.

Sources: CDC, Healthwise, KKF.org

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## Screening for depression

Evaluate your symptoms and find out if you might have depression. This brief screening calculates how many common depression symptoms you have and suggests where you might be on a scale from not depressed to depressed based on your answers.

Go online to complete the screening:  
[MagellanHealthcare.com/about/bh-resources/mental-health/self-screening](https://MagellanHealthcare.com/about/bh-resources/mental-health/self-screening)

## Treatment options

Depression can be treated in various ways. Counseling, psychotherapy, and antidepressants can all be used. Lifestyle changes, such as more exercise, can also help.

Work with your doctor to find the best treatment for you. It may take a few attempts, and it can take several weeks for the medicine and therapy to take effect. Try to be patient and stick to your treatment plan.

Contact your Employee Assistance Program by phone at 1-866-580-9046 (TTY 711) or go online to [MagellanAscend.com](https://MagellanAscend.com) to get started.

