

Helping Someone Who Is Depressed

Recognizing that a friend or loved one has depression is the first step. Some signs include:

- **Difficulty remembering**
- **Inability to make decisions**
- **Lost interest in favorite activities**
- **Recurring aches and pains that do not respond to treatment by a doctor**
- **Sleeping a lot, or waking up in the middle of the night, or not being able to sleep**
- **Irritability**
- **Overeating or loss of appetite**
- **Lack of energy.**

Depression is a normal reaction to the loss of a loved one or changing life conditions. Sometimes a friend can be helped when they are depressed. Here are some suggestions:

- **Pitch in and help with tasks or chores, maybe shopping or getting to the doctor**
- **Ask them to go for a walk with you**
- **Show them you care—give them a little gift, invite them to dinner**
- **Invite them to do something new and different with you—maybe a road trip**
- **Listen to their concerns (but do not try to become their therapist!)**

If depression lasts longer than two or three months, the matter is very serious. When the person recognizes that they are suffering from depression, suggest that they see a doctor about it and help them make the appointment or take them.

[SOURCES: Psychology Information Online; have-a-heart.com; healthieryou.com; National Institute of Health]

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