

What is Depression?

Depression is a form of mood disorder that has a wide range of symptoms. It is very different from grief and it is more than just feeling sad.

Depression affects the entire person; how a person thinks, feels, and behaves is not a weakness or a flaw and those who suffer from depression can not "just snap out of it."

Symptoms of Depression

- *Persistent sad or irritable mood
- *Withdrawal from friends and activities
- *Sadness and hopelessness
- *Lack of enthusiasm, energy or motivation
- *Poor self-esteem or guilt
- *Substance abuse
- *Changes in eating or sleeping habits
- *Suicidal thoughts or actions

*For a diagnosis of depression, the symptoms must persist for a period of two weeks or longer and it must impact daily functioning. It is extremely important that depressed teens receive prompt, professional treatment

What places a child at risk for depression? What are treatments?

Risk factors for depression include:

- *Traumatic events
- *Loss (romance, death, dignity)
- *ADHD or Conduct Problems
- *Family history of depression
- *Uncertainty about sexual orientation/identity
- *Alcohol or substance abuse problems

Treatments for Depression

- *Education about depression as an illness
- *Counseling
- *Medications (are more effective when combined with therapy)