

Major Depression Information and Resources

Major depressive episodes may occur once or twice in a lifetime, or they may recur frequently. They may also take place spontaneously, during or after the death of a loved one, a romantic breakup, a medical illness, or other life event.

Some people with major depression may feel that life is not worth living and some will attempt to end their lives.

Major depression involves at least five symptoms for a two-week period. Such an episode is disabling and will interfere with the ability to work, study, eat, and sleep

A major depressive episode may include these symptoms:

- Persistent sad, anxious or "empty" mood
- Feelings of hopelessness, pessimism
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, helplessness
- Loss of interest or pleasure in hobbies and activities, including sex
- Decreased energy, fatigue, feeling "slowed down"
- Difficulty concentrating, remembering, making decisions
- Insomnia, early-morning awakening, or oversleeping
- Low appetite and weight loss or overeating and weight gain
- Thoughts of death or suicide, suicide attempts
- Restlessness, irritability
- Persistent physical symptoms that do not respond to treatment, such as headaches, digestive disorders and pain for which no other cause can be diagnosed.