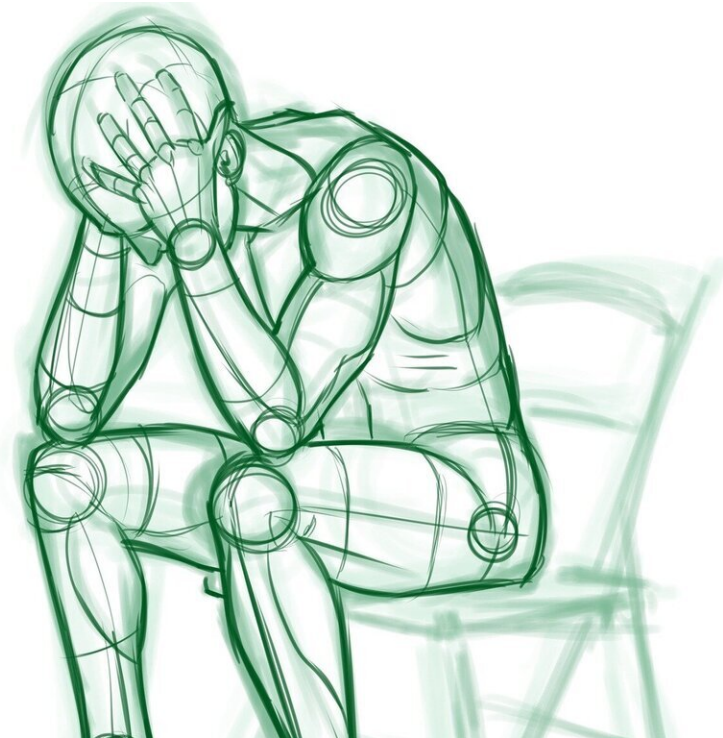


5 signs of depression you shouldn't ignore

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It can be painful to watch a friend struggle with their mental health. Here are some common symptoms of depression to watch for and ways to support a friend or loved one who is struggling.

1. Difficulty getting out of bed

It's perfectly normal to enjoy sleeping in or spending time in bed. However, if it has become difficult to find the motivation to get out of bed or get ready in the morning, this could be a sign of [depression](#). Depression can make us feel fatigued and physically drained to the point where even small tasks, like getting up in the morning or showering, can feel exhausting or difficult to do.

2. Sleeping habits

The physical and mental exhaustion that comes with depression can also affect our sleeping habits. Changes in sleep can show up in a number of ways. Sometimes this means sleeping throughout the day, using sleep as a way to pass the time or preferring sleep to other [daily activities](#).

Other times, sleep changes can create bouts of insomnia, which can make it difficult to fall asleep or stay asleep at night. Missing out on quality, [restful sleep](#) can increase our anxiety levels and intensify feelings of distress. Sometimes, this creates a cycle where our anxious thoughts keep us awake and negatively impact our sleep, which then leads to more anxious thoughts.

3. Changes in appetite

Our appetite and eating habits can also be impacted by depression. Some people may experience an increased appetite, while others have less of an appetite or may not be hungry at all. If you are noticing changes in your [sleep habits](#), like the ones listed above, you may also notice changes in the way you eat. This is because [sleep](#) helps regulate our hunger hormones, which help to keep us from over- or undereating.

4. Persistent irritability or mood swings

Depression can cause us to experience outbursts and mood swings. One

minute we're angry, the next we're crying uncontrollably, or we shut down and go numb. Changes in our mood can switch in a moment's notice. Sometimes these changes can be triggered by small or insignificant challenges, and other times they may come about completely unprovoked. If you notice a pattern of irritability or [mood swings](#) that last more than a few days, it may be linked to depression.

5. Difficulty experiencing joy or connection

When we're depressed, it can take all of the enjoyment out of the things we love and make it more difficult for us to connect to those closest to us. We may begin to lose interest in hobbies, friendships, schoolwork, [social activities](#), sex or life in general. When we find that we are no longer enjoying or finding pleasure in the things we used to enjoy, this can be a sign of depression. We may also isolate ourselves from close friends, [family members](#) or others who care about us, which can perpetuate the symptoms of depression.

More information: If you are currently experiencing one or more of these symptoms, it's okay to seek support. If you are having thoughts of suicide, call the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline at 988.

Provided by University of Colorado at Boulder

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