

Ratgeber Depression – Englisch

Depression

Simply explained

The Guide



A Sandoz Brand

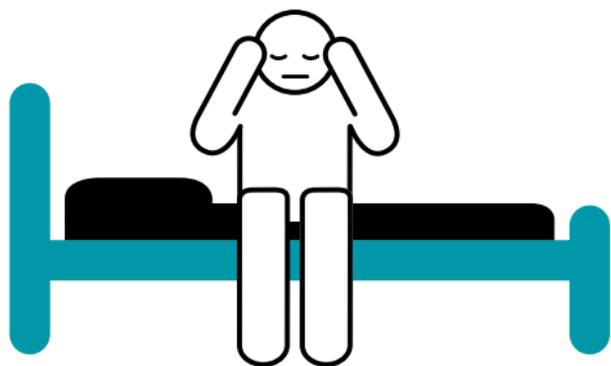
In simple terms

Depression



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- Abs
- etc



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Causes

- Predisposition
- Physical illnesses
- Environmental factors
- Psychological factors

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Symptoms

- Lack of drive
- Despondency
- Lack of joy and hopelessness
- Anxiety
- Sleep disturbances
- etc.

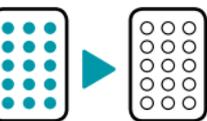
Drugs

It generally takes time before you notice the effects. Even if the condition may be useful to you, the drugs



-pharmacological therapies

support in everyday life
sports/exercise
counselling, self-help groups
abstinence from alcohol and drugs



Drug treatment

It takes a few weeks to see an improvement. As your condition improves, it's important to continue taking the medication for a while longer.

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What helps?

Drugs, in particular antidepressants, psychotherapy or a combination of the two can be helpful in treating depression.

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These measures will allow you to live an ordered life again.

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Important note for readers

The content-related and scientific information in this guide reflect the current state of information at the time of editing (see reverse). It is meant to provide an initial overview of the topic. It is not, however, a substitute for advice from a doctor. Please always carefully read the package insert of your medications. For the reasons mentioned, 1 A Pharma GmbH cannot assume any guarantee or liability for content or information from this guide.

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Dear reader,

The earlier the signs of depression are recognised, the easier it is to treat depression.

This guide will help you recognise at what point a temporary depressive phase turns into persistent depression and how it can be treated. In many cases, a combination of psychotherapy and medications has been successful. The affected person can also actively contribute to improving their situation. Together with the patient, the doctor will decide on the best course of action. If you have any other questions, please speak to your doctor or pharmacist.

Best wishes

Your 1 A Pharma Team

What is depression?

Everyone feels sad or unhappy from time to time. But that does not mean everyone is depressed. In a depression, the depressed mood lasts for a longer period. The affected person feels depressed, broods and lacks the energy to do anything. Many depressed people say they are unable to feel joy, have barely any hope and have problems sleeping.

Very often, their close friends or relatives are the ones who first notice a change. The following rule applies for successful treatment of depression: the earlier it starts, the better.

Depression can affect anyone, old or young. Some patients are able to overcome depression in a short period of time. In most cases, the depression lasts between six months and one year; in others, it lasts even longer or even their entire life.

Living with depression often makes life very difficult – not only for the affected persons, but also for their family, friends and colleagues.

What types of depression are there?

Depression manifests itself in different forms and with different characteristics. The most common types of depression are:

- Mild or moderate depressive episode
- Severe depressive episode
- Bipolar affective disorder
- Mild ("baby blues") and severe postpartum depression (PPD)
- Seasonal affective disorder (SAD) ("winter depression")

Mild or moderate depressive episode

The symptoms last at least two weeks, but the effect on everyday life is limited. Affected persons appear depressed and often lacking in motivation. Their mood is characterised by a lack of joy and hope. Sometimes, they lose interest in a hobby, for example. They also find it difficult to concentrate, e.g. at work.

Severe depressive episode

During a severe depressive episode, affected persons are significantly impaired in their everyday life or are even unable to cope with it at all. The consequences of this are manifold:

- Low self-esteem
- Lack of appetite
- Sleep disturbances
- Rapid fatigue
- Exhaustion
- Social withdrawal
- Tendency to brood
- Permanent feeling of inner tension

In these cases, you should consult a doctor and seek treatment right away. Sometimes patients may suffer from perception disorders and from delusions.

In the worst case, patients constantly think about death. But not only the psyche is affected. Some patients also suffer from physical pain for which there is no apparent organic reason.

Do not be alarmed: not every depression lasts long. Some people only suffer from a depressive episode once in their life.

Bipolar affective disorder

Bipolar affective disorder is a chronic disease. Extreme mood swings between euphoria ("manic") and despair ("depressive") are typical disease symptoms. These phases can alternate several times or can each occur at a certain time of year. In severe cases, affected persons lose their sense of reality. They exhibit strange and illogical behaviour.



Mild and severe postpartum depression

Many mothers suffer from baby blues a few days after giving birth. Physicians refer to this as "mild postpartum depression". Women suffering from mild postpartum depression feel anxious and lack self-confidence. The baby blues usually disappear within a few weeks without treatment. This is different to postpartum depression, which usually occurs two to three weeks after the delivery and lasts longer. In addition to suffering the symptoms of baby blues, the mothers feel quickly overwhelmed and are unable to cope with everyday life. Other symptoms include sleep disturbances, panic attacks or even fear of death.



Seasonal affective disorder (SAD)

The milder form of this depression is more commonly known as "winter blues". It starts in autumn or winter and can last until spring. Consequences can include:

- Anxiety
- Stress
- Mood swings
- Sleep disturbances
- Loss of appetite



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Tip

The following rule applies for successful treatment of depression: the earlier it starts, the better.

What causes depression?

The causes of depression are manifold. In some people, external factors, such as losing a family member or losing one's job, cause depression. Sometimes there is no particular reason. Current knowledge suggests that a variety of factors play a role:

- Predisposition
- Physical illnesses
- Environmental factors
- Emotional ("psychological") factors, such as low self-esteem

Depressive disorders are usually associated with a disturbed metabolism in the brain. The metabolism regulates all cycles that a person undergoes every day, for example, the sleeping and waking phases. In this context, hormones often play a role. Hormones are substances that keep our metabolism going. Metabolic disturbances can cause serious diseases, including depression. Some people are also

predisposed to developing depression; they have a family history of depression. However, predisposed people do not necessarily always become depressed.



Predisposition



Physical illness



Environmental factors



Emotional factors



Alcohol abuse



Drug addiction



Hormonal chaos
in women



Loneliness

What are the symptoms of depression?

Patients suffering from depression feel depressed over a long period of time and experience little or no joy.

Depressed patients frequently suffer from some of the following symptoms:

- Despondency
- Tiredness, lack of drive, exhaustion, rapid fatigue
- Lack of self-confidence/self-esteem
- Tendency to brood, concentration and attention disorders
- Inability to enjoy things that are otherwise considered pleasant or interesting
- Physical pain and discomfort
- Sleep disturbances



Despondency



Tiredness



Tendency to brood

- Avoiding other people, sometimes even very close friends (social withdrawal)
- Feeling helpless, joyless and hopeless, feeling anxious
- Sense of guilt or feeling worthless
- Increasing problems at work
- Lack of appetite
- Loss of interest in sexual activity (loss of libido)
- Suicidal intentions and thoughts about death
- Self-harm

Important

These symptoms can occur with depression. If you notice any changes that indicate depression, please visit your doctor right away.



Sleep disturbances



Lack of appetite



Loss of libido

How is depression diagnosed?

Everyone occasionally has negative thoughts and moods. But at what point must affected persons seek treatment? Where does depression begin – especially given that the transitions are not always clear? Only a doctor can diagnose this precisely. He will ask the patient, for example,

- what is currently or has recently worried him
- what pre-existing conditions he suffers from
- whether other family members suffer from depression, or
- whether he has any physical or organic illnesses.



During the discussion, the patient can talk about his fears and worries. He tells the doctor about his life so far, his family and his current circumstances. This gives the doctor an initial insight into the patient's personality. The doctor will also ask other specific questions. An international classification system (ICD-10), a kind of medical navigation system, helps him establish the

correct diagnosis. It also helps him identify whether the patient is already suffering from depression that requires treatment.



In addition to the in-depth discussion, the doctor will also carry out a physical examination. This examination includes the internal organs and the nervous system – from the reflexes through to coordination.

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Information about drugs the affected person is taking or has recently taken is also important – especially cardiovascular drugs, cortisone or antibiotics. It is also important to tell the doctor about any addictions, including drug or alcohol abuse, as these may precipitate a depression.

Excluding other diseases

In addition, the doctor will check whether the patient has any underlying organic diseases or acute physical illnesses. Some of these conditions cause symptoms similar to those of depression. These diseases and illnesses include:

- Inflammation of the brain
- Parkinson's disease
- Multiple sclerosis
- Epilepsy or
- Dementia, especially in the elderly.

Other psychological disorders, such as schizophrenia or anxiety disorders, also cause similar symptoms. Depressive phases are known to occur temporarily in some of these disorders, but the required treatment is different to the treatment required for "pure depression".

The doctor will make a report based on this information. The exact diagnosis will show him the right course of treatment.

How can depression be treated?

Depression is generally easy to treat. Many patients who have suffered from depression for a long time are able to lead a relatively normal life because they receive good treatment – often from a psychotherapist or a specialist in psychiatry and psychotherapy. These healthcare professionals are specialised, among other things, in treating depression. In addition to drug therapy, the patient receives support in the form of individual counselling to help him cope with his disease and everyday life.

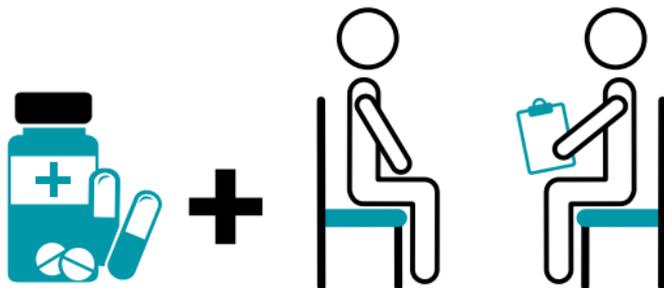
But patients can also do a number of things themselves and be proactive. This includes regular visits to their doctor and taking their prescribed medication. But it also includes engaging in everyday activities, such as sports and a healthy diet.

The first step

If you feel depressed for an extended period of time, please visit a doctor. You may find this hard to do. Ask a friend or relative to go to the doctor with you. The first step would normally be to visit your general practitioner.

Perhaps it would help you to write down beforehand what is currently bothering you. Often, the general practitioner will advise you to visit a psychiatrist or psychologist. To ensure that the treatment is successful, you should trust your doctor completely. This will help you to open up to him completely and to talk about your feelings and mood. You should also agree with your doctor on the planned therapy.

In most cases, drugs, psychotherapy or a combination of the two have been shown to be successful.



Pharmacological therapies

Antidepressants

Antidepressants are used in the treatment against ("anti") depression. Depending on the type and severity of your disease, you and your doctor will choose the right drug for you. It generally takes a few weeks before you notice an improvement.

Sometimes, an antidepressant may not have the desired effect. Adverse effects may also occur. In this case, the patient should speak to his doctor again. Even if the condition improves, it may be useful to continue taking the drugs for a while longer.

Herbal medicinal products

Doctors refer to these as phytopharmaceuticals (from Greek: phytón = plant). A so-called phytopharmaceutical drug consists of active herbal ingredients. St. John's wort has been shown to be effective in treating mild to moderate depression. In this case too, patients should only take this drug in consultation with their doctor or pharmacist.

Non-pharmacological therapies

There are a number of things affected persons can do to ease the depression or to permanently gain control of their disease. They may, however, need external support for this, for example, from their friends, relatives or social counselling centres.



Support in everyday life



Sports and exercise



Counselling

Support in everyday life

- Everyday life: Depressed people often find it difficult to meet with friends or their family, even though company will offer them distraction. Self-help groups (see section "Where can I get help?") are a good place to meet new people and to share experiences with one another.

- **Finances:** If you have financial problems, your local welfare services or debt counselling centre can help you. These places provide information about financial support. The advice is usually provided free of charge and, at your request, anonymously.
- **Career:** If you are having problems at work and you feel overwhelmed, visit your company doctor. You can speak to him about your problems. He may be able to help you reduce your current workload or your duties – at least until you are back on your feet again.
- **Unemployment:** If you are unemployed or pursuing a change in career, the local employment agency is your first point of contact. Some citizens' offices and local social facilities also offer advice in case of unemployment or inability to work due to depression.
- **Partnership and family:** Conflicts with a partner or in the family are an additional burden for depressed persons. Couple or family counselling centres support affected persons – in addition to the treating doctor.

Sports and exercise

Sport is known to release endorphins. This means that exercise can also support the treatment of mild to moderate depression. It is important that the affected person regularly engages in sports. It is important that you choose a sport that you enjoy. If you are unsure, speak to your doctor. He can help you decide what type of exercise is best for you.

Abstinence from narcotics

A patient should abstain completely from taking narcotics such as alcohol and drugs. They increase the probability of suffering from depression and can aggravate an existing depression.

Counselling

A combination of counselling and/or psychotherapy and drugs helps the majority of patients. Counselling generally answers the following questions:

- What are the reasons behind the depression?
- What caused the depression?
- Why is the patient still feeling depressed?
- What could help improve this condition?

Counselling or psychotherapy takes place in group or individual discussions – preferably one to two times per week for a period of 50 minutes each. The treatment is generally long-term: On average, it lasts eight to twelve months. During the therapy, the patient works through things he has experienced in life:

- What impact do they have on his current circumstances?
- How does the depressed person respond to relationships?
- How does he behave towards others?

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This helps the patient to develop a better image of himself. A good doctor will ask specific questions. The patient should trust his doctor completely and should also want to have the treatment.

From the many counselling therapies available, psychotherapy based on psychoanalysis and cognitive behavioural therapy have been shown to be effective. When used to treat depression, these therapies are generally paid by the patient's health insurance.

- Psychotherapy based on psychoanalysis:
According to this school of thought, depression is caused by an unconscious internal conflict. This conflict is based on an unpleasant experience in the patient's past, often during childhood. The doctor and patient first have to visualise this conflict and then relive it repeatedly. The affected person relives the situation over and over again – this is generally a very painful process. However, this is precisely what is meant to eliminate the symptoms and ease the depression, in the best case even cure it.
- Cognitive behavioural therapy: This approach sees depression as "acquired negative behaviour". It can cause negative thoughts, dejection and a lack of drive. The depression can be overcome if the patient learns to counter it with new behaviours.

Some patients benefit from other methods of treating depression, for example, family therapy or music and art therapy. Patients should decide with their doctor which form of treatment is most suitable for them. If you have the feeling that a certain therapy is not helping you, you should speak to your doctor. He will consider the alternatives together with you.

! If you are having a crisis

Are you thinking about harming yourself?
Or are you losing the will to live? Then you should seek help. Call a doctor or the emergency medical services. You can also call the emergency police services or the EU-wide emergency number. If you know someone who is having these kinds of thoughts, do not leave them alone and call for help.

Emergency medical service: 116 117

Emergency police number: 110

EU-wide emergency number: 112

TelefonSeelsorge: 116 123

Where can I get help?

Deutsche DepressionsLiga e.V. (DDL)

Auf der Lache 44 • 71729 Erdmannhausen

Tel.: 07144 7048950

kontakt@depressionsliga.de • www.depressionsliga.de

The DDL is a nationwide, active patient advocacy group. Its members are either affected by depression themselves or have relatives who suffer from depression.

Robert-Enke-Stiftung

Schillerstraße 4 • 30890 Barsinghausen

Tel.: 0241 8036777

info@robert-enke-stiftung.de

www.robert-enke-stiftung.de

Together with the Department of Psychiatry, Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics of the RWTH Aachen University Hospital, the Robert Enke Foundation has started a counselling hotline.

SeeleFon

Oppelner Straße 130 • 53119 Bonn

Tel.: 0228 71002424

help@seelefon.org • www.psychiatrie.de/bapk

SeeleFon is a nationwide telephone and email counseling service of the Federal Association of the Relatives of the Mentally Ill.

Stiftung Deutsche Depressionshilfe

Semmelweisstraße 10 • 04103 Leipzig

Tel.: 0341 9724-493

info@deutsche-depressionshilfe.de

www.deutsche-depressionshilfe.de

The foundation provides information and aims to improve the situation of affected persons through public relations, further education and promoting research.

TelefonSeelsorge

Caroline-Michaelis-Straße 1 • 10115 Berlin

Tel.: 0800 1110-111; 0800 1110-222; 116 123 (toll-free)

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Einfach verstehen.