Sometimes we talk about feeling “depressed”. Depression is a normal response to deep, significant loss, traumatic change, or a pile-up of stressors we feel incapable of managing, overcoming, or eliminating from our lives.

Depression can also be a clinical illness, and is more than just feeling sad for a few days as a response to known events. It is a serious illness that involves one’s mood, thoughts, body, function, and relationships. Depression as an illness is pervasive; it lasts weeks, months, even years. The person who suffers with it often feels at a loss to do anything about it on his or her own. Happiness is elusive, energy and motivation are lacking, and control over one’s feelings, behaviors, and thoughts are often limited. Below is a list of several signs of depression. Not everyone experiences all the symptoms; some experience a few, and others may experience many of them.

- Persistent sad, anxious, or "empty" mood
- Feelings of hopelessness, pessimism
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness
- Loss of interest or pleasure in hobbies and activities that were once enjoyed
- Decreased energy, fatigue, feeling "slowed down"
- Feelings of helplessness, lack of control
- Difficulty concentrating, remembering, making decisions
- Insomnia, early-morning wakening, or sleeping too much
- Appetite loss, weight loss, or overeating and weight gain
- Thoughts of death or suicide, suicide attempts
- Restlessness, irritability
- Leading a hapless life style - many accidents, speeding unsafely, not taking care of physical needs like nutrition and sleep
- Persistent physical symptoms that do not respond to treatment - headaches, digestive disorders, chronic pain

If reading the above list causes you to wonder about yourself, or perhaps someone close to you, there is help. Depression is not a sign of personal weakness or a condition that can be willed or wished away. People with depression cannot merely "pull themselves together" and get better.

1.800.451.1834
Taking a depression-screening test can be a quick way to determine whether or not someone is actually experiencing symptoms of depression. This quick screening can assist someone in determining whether he or she is suffering from short-term “blues”, or whether he or she might benefit from more extensive assessment for depression.

Below is a link to an online screening test that can help you or someone you know get a better sense of symptoms. This screening test is not designed to diagnose depression. An accurate diagnosis can only be made by a qualified mental health professional. If you decide to take the test, you then have some options. If you would like further assessment, you can contact the Employee Assistance Program and speak with an EAP Counselor, who may then refer you to a mental health professional or physician for treatment. It is important to remember that, with appropriate treatment, most depression is alleviated, and people can feel better and function more effectively.

If you are concerned about possible symptoms of depression after taking this test, or would like to discuss your results, please contact your Employee Assistance Program at **800-451-1834**.

We are here to help.

http://allpsych.com/tests/diagnostic/depression.html

**Depression Resources:**

- http://www.stress-anxiety-depression.org/depression
- www.healingwell.com/depression/
- www.depression.about.com

**Seasonal Affective Disorder Resources:**

- http://psychcentral.com/resources/Depression/Seasonal_Affective_Discord/
- http://www.nosad.org/

**Resource: National Institute for Mental Health and AllOne Health Resources**