

Are you an elder with depression?

Fact Sheet

Do you struggle with feelings of helplessness and hopelessness? Are you finding it harder and harder to get through the day? If so, you're not alone.

Depression can happen to anyone, at any age, no matter your background or your previous accomplishments in life. And the symptoms of depression can affect every aspect of your life, impacting your energy, appetite, sleep, work proficiency, hobbies, and relationships.

Unfortunately, too many depressed elders fail to recognize the symptoms of depression, or don't take the steps to get the help they need. There are many reasons why depression is so often overlooked in elders:

- You may assume you have good reason to be down or that depression is just part of aging.
- You may be isolated — which can lead to depression — with few around to notice your distress.
- You may not realize that your physical complaints are signs of depression.
- You may be reluctant to talk about your feelings or ask for help.



Where can I find information?

The National Institute of Mental Health has a variety of publications on depression available at www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications. If you need additional information and support, you may find the following resources to be helpful:

- Locate affordable health care in your area within the federal government. A bureau of the Health Resources and Services Administration provides a Health Center Database for a nationwide directory of clinics to obtain low or no-cost health care. Start your search at findahealthcenter.hrsa.gov.
- The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration provides the Mental Health Treatment Program Locator, which is an online resource for locating mental health treatment facilities and programs. The Mental Health Treatment Locator section of the Behavioral Health Treatment Services Locator lists facilities providing help for depression. Find a facility in your state at findtreatment.samhsa.gov.
- NIHSeniorHealth.gov is a website for elders that makes aging-related health information easily accessible for family members and friends seeking reliable, easy-to-understand online health information. This site was developed by the National Institute on Aging and the National Library of Medicine, both part of the National Institutes of Health. Visit at www.nihseniorhealth.gov.