What is depression?

Everyone feels sad sometimes, but these feelings usually pass after a few days. When you have depression, you have trouble with daily life for weeks at a time. Depression is a common but serious illness that needs treatment. Sometimes depression will resolve after talking with a friend, a counselor, or a doctor. More serious forms of depression may also respond better when medication is used.

Currently, three forms of depression have been described.

* **Major depression** involves severe symptoms which make it hard for you to work, study, sleep, eat, and enjoy life.
* **Dysthymic disorder or dysthymia** describes depressive symptoms that last a long time (2 years or more) but are less severe than major depression.
* **Minor depression** is like the other two types but less severe and may not last as long. Many times in response to a sad event or situation.

What does it mean to have depression?

Different people have different symptoms. Some common symptoms include:

* Feeling sad or “empty”
* Feeling hopeless, irritable, anxious, or guilty

Reference: National Institute of Mental Health, Depression. Referenced on June 25, 2019. <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/depression/index.shtml>

* Loss of interest in favorite activities
* Emotional and physical withdrawal from other people
* Feeling very tired
* Having trouble concentrating or remembering details
* Not able to sleep or sleeping too much
* Overeating or not wanting to eat at all, compared to usual
* Thoughts of suicide; suicide attempts
* Aches or pains, headaches, cramps, or digestive problems

Are there other problems from depression?

Yes. Some people with depression turn to alcohol and drugs to try and feel temporarily better when they are high. However, using alcohol and drugs can make the symptoms worse.

How can I help myself if I have a depressive disorder?

In Job Corps, our goal of treatment for depression is to help you understand and manage your condition so that you can move toward finding employment. It may include brief therapy (especially cognitive-behaviorally focused), medication (especially antidepressants), and participation in groups and activities.

* Talk to your counselor and health and wellness staff
* Ask for reasonable accommodations, if needed
* Stay on your medication, if prescribed
* If your medication is making you feel strange or bad, please contact health and wellness staff
* Keep a routine for eating and sleeping; make sure you get enough sleep
* Keep track of your symptoms when you get depressed so that you can get help as quickly as possible
* Ask a close friend to help you stick to your treatment plans
* Be patient about your symptoms; improvement takes time

I know someone who has depression. What can I do?

* If they are thinking about hurting them self or someone else get help immediately
* Do not leave the person alone
* Let the nearest Job Corps staff member know NOW!
* If not able to find a Job Corps staff member quickly, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room
* Access the Job Corps Safety Hotline (844-JC1-SAFE) via text, email, phone, mobile app or web site
* Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline  
  (800) 273-TALK (8255)  
  TTY: (800) 799-4TTY (4889)