

Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) or Depression



What is it?

- A common mental health problem
- Feeling very sad for a long time and not enjoying things you used to like
- Lasts for at least 2 weeks and makes it hard to do everyday activities
- It's more than just feeling down for a short time—it's a serious condition that affects how a person lives their life



What can cause it?

Many things can make depression more likely:

- Sad or stressful things happening in your life
- Having family members who've had depression
- Being someone who often feels sad or worries a lot
- Having a big health problem that lasts a long time
- Using drugs or drinking too much alcohol
- Not having friends or family to help you

Depression usually happens because of a mix of these things, not just one. Everyone's experience is different.

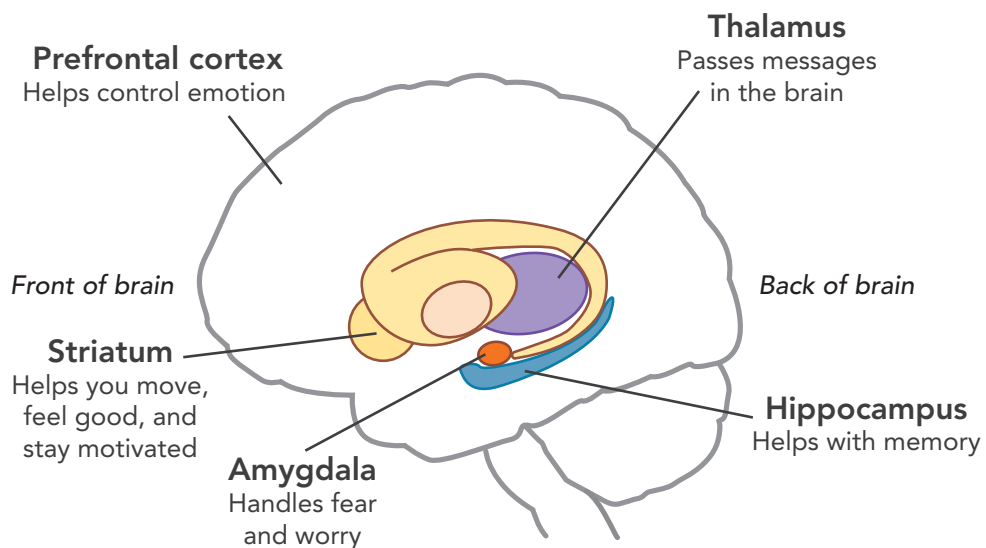


What are common signs?

- Feeling very sad most of the time
- Not liking things you used to enjoy
- Eating or sleeping more or less than usual
- Feeling very tired all the time
- Finding it hard to think clearly
- Feeling like you're not important
- Thinking about dying



How does it affect the brain?



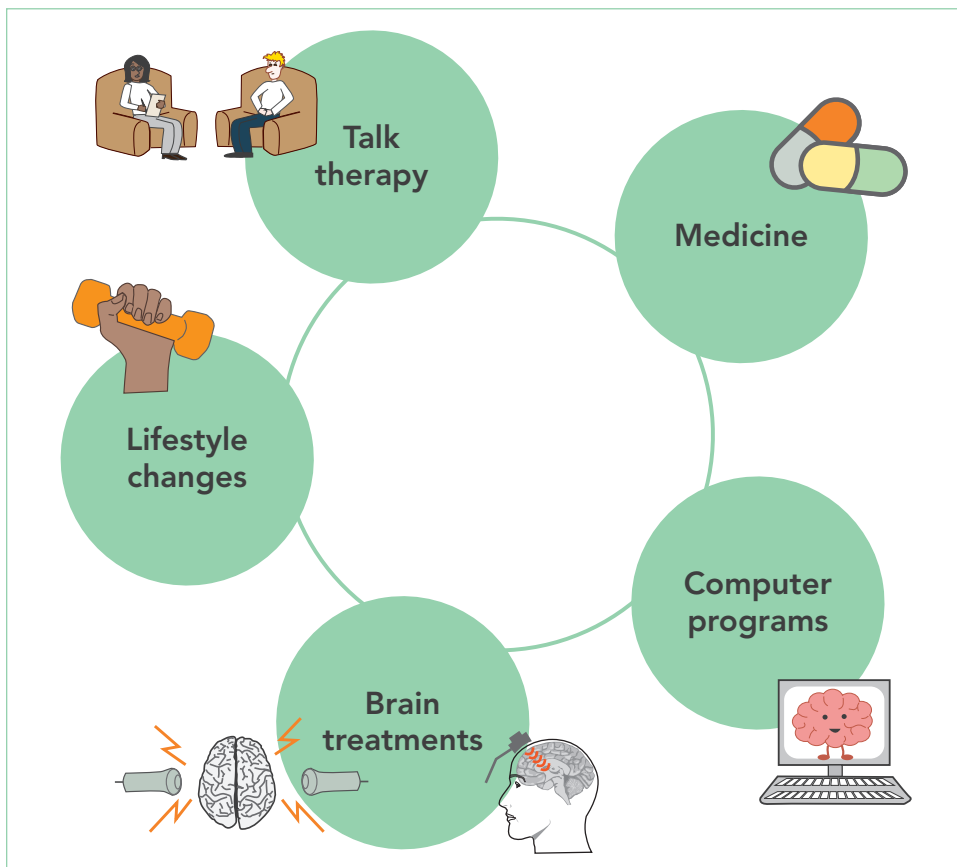
In depression, some of these areas might work differently or look smaller than usual. This can affect how a person feels, thinks, or acts.



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How can it be treated?



Your health professional can help you choose the best treatment or combinations of treatments for you. Sometimes, people need to try a few different things before they find what works best.



When should I seek help?

- You feel very sad for more than 2 weeks
- You have trouble doing everyday things
- You don't feel better on your own

Get help right away if you:

- Think about hurting yourself
- Stay away from friends and family
- Feel like life isn't worth living
- Use drugs or alcohol to feel better



Where can I get more help?

Suicide & Crisis Lifeline—Call or text 988

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)—[nami.org](https://www.nami.org)

Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA)—[dbsalliance.org](https://www.dbsalliance.org)

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- ✓ Depression is a serious health problem
- ✓ Depression doesn't just go away on its own
- ✓ Depression is not your fault
- ✓ Health professionals can help treat depression
- ✓ Anyone can get depression



Neuroscience Education Institute

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