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Depression Symptom Checklist

developed by the National Institutes of Health

IN THE PAST TWO WEEKS HAVE YOU FREQUENTLY EXPERIENCED

- Persistent sad or "empty" mood
- Loss of interest or pleasure in ordinary activities, including sex
- Decreased energy, fatigue, being "slowed down"
- Sleep disturbances--insomnia, early morning waking, or oversleeping
- Eating disturbances--loss of appetite and weight, or weight gain
- Difficulty concentrating, remembering, making decisions
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, helplessness
- Thoughts of death or suicide, suicide attempts
- Irritability
- Frequent crying
- Chronic aches and pains that don't respond to treatment

AT WORK ARE YOU EXPERIENCING

- Decreased productivity
- Morale problems
- Lack of cooperation
- Safety problems, accidents
- Absenteeism
- Frequent complaints of being tired all the time
- Complaints of unexplained aches and pains
- Alcohol and/or drug abuse

DO YOU SOMETIMES EXPERIENCE

- Excessively "high" moods
- Irritability
- Decreased need for sleep
- Increased energy and activity
- Increased talking, moving, and sexual activity
- Racing thoughts

- Disturbed ability to make decisions
- Grandiose notions
- Being easily distracted

If you have been experiencing several of the above symptoms, you may be suffering from depression. Please read the information on the following page .

SOME FACTS ABOUT DEPRESSION

Depressive illness makes you feel exhausted, worthless, helpless, and hopeless. Such negative thoughts and uncomfortable feelings make some people feel like giving up. It is important to realize that these negative views are part of the depression and typically do not accurately reflect your situation. Negative thinking fades as treatment begins to take effect. In the meantime:

- Do not set difficult goals for yourself or take on a great deal of responsibility.
- Break large tasks into small ones, set priorities, and do *what you can* as you can.
- Do not expect too much from yourself. This will only increase feelings of failure.
- Try to be with other people; it's usually better than being alone.
- Participate in activities that may make you feel better. You might try taking a walk, going to a movie or sports event, or engaging in spiritual or social activities.
- Do not make major life decisions, such as changing jobs or getting married or divorced, without consulting others who know you well and have a more objective view of your situation. In any case, it's advisable to postpone important decisions until your depression has lifted.
- Do not expect to 'snap out' of your depression. People rarely do. Help yourself as much as you can, learn how to be gentle with yourself, and do not blame yourself for not being 'up to par.'

And remember . . .

- Do not accept your negative thinking as truth. It is part of the depression and will disappear as your depression responds to treatment.

- Being depressed does not mean you are ‘crazy.’
- Depression is not a sign of personal or emotional weakness, nor is it a personality flaw.
- Depression can and does happen to strong, healthy people who are able to cope very well with their lives.
- Depression is not a punishment for having done something wrong in the past.
- Depression will generally not go away if you try to wait it out or use willpower.
- You cannot cure depression solely by reducing stress, going on a vacation, changing your diet, getting more exercise, losing weight, having a love affair, or taking more vitamins.

Please call if you'd like more information. Depression need not be a life sentence, and there are many effective solutions to help a person restore a sense of well-being.

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