



NetCare Access is your connection to mental health and alcohol/drug addiction services in Franklin County.

If you or someone you know is in crisis, visit one of our crisis sites or call our 24-hour NetCare Access Crisis Hotline at (614) 276-C.A.R.E.

# ACCESSING Information About Depression

## What is Depression?

Depression is a mental illness that affects the mind, body, thoughts and behavior. Depression can affect the way you feel about yourself, the way you act around others, the way you think about things and the way you feel physically. Most people feel down from time to time, but with depression, these feelings are serious and long lasting. People with depression, cannot merely “get better”. Without treatment, depressive symptoms can become severe, lasting for up to years. There may be several factors that cause depression including a family history, imbalances of certain chemicals, major life changes, major illness, use of drugs or alcohol and possibly, certain medications. Depression is common and can affect anyone from babies to the elderly. There are several common types of depression such as Major Depression, Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), Dystymia, Manic Depressive Illness and Bipolar Disorder. People with depression may not recognize the symptoms, be afraid to appear weak, or feel too depressed to take action. Depression can be treated successfully and with treatment, most people can start feeling well again in a few weeks.

## Facts

- In a given year, more than 17 million Americans will suffer from some form of depression.
- Depression is more wide-spread than heart disease, cancer and AIDS.
- Untreated depression can disrupt ones work, family relations and social life.
- Women are more likely to be diagnosed with depression than men. This may be the result of biological differences or a greater willingness to express feelings.
- Depression often co-exists with disorders such as Substance Abuse Disorder (32%), Panic Disorder (13%) and Eating Disorder (75%). The rate of depression among those with medical illnesses is also significant.
- The risk of suicide among people with depression is 30 times that of the general population. About 2/3 of people who complete suicide have a depressive disorder at the time of their death.
- Depression is usually treated successfully without hospitalization.

## **Signs and Symptoms**

**Symptoms of Depression include:**

- Persistent sad, anxious or “empty” mood
- Feelings of hopelessness, helplessness or pessimism
- Feelings of self-blame or guilt
- Sleep disturbances such as sleeping too much, not being able to sleep or early-morning awakening
- Changes in eating patterns such as eating more or eating less
- Decreased energy, feeling fatigue or “slowed-down”
- Suicidal thoughts or actions
- Irritability, feeling “restless”
- Inability to concentrate or make decisions
- Persistent physical symptoms that are not responding to treatment
- Stomach aches, indigestion or changes in bowel habits.
- Neglect of responsibilities and appearance
- Inability to enjoy activities
- Loss of sexual desire

## **Treatment:**

**Several intervention approaches are available to help individuals diagnosed with Depression:**

- Antidepressant medications often help ease the symptoms of depression and return a person to normal functioning. Antidepressant medications are not habit forming.
- Psychotherapy helps many depressed people understand themselves and cope with their problems. Therapy can change relationships that contribute to relationships and help people change negative thinking and behavior patterns.
- Electroconvulsive Therapy (ECT) may be useful for individuals who haven't responded to other treatment and whose depression is severe or life-threatening. ECT involves a precise dose of electric current being applied to the brain. ECT is painless as the patient is under anesthesia. Memory loss and exhaustion can be temporary side effects of ECT.
- Light Therapy is exposure to bright, artificial light which often helps people with seasonal affective disorder.

## **How to receive help:**

**A person with Depression can benefit from talking with a mental health professional, such as a psychologist, counselor, psychiatrist or social worker, who can assist in providing the individual and his or her family with additional approaches to treatment.**

**If you or someone you know has Depression or is in a crisis, contact Netcare Access at (614) 276-C.A.R.E. Mental health assessments are provided at both of Netcare's crisis sites, located at 199 S. Central Avenue and 741 E. Broad Street, on a walk-in, first-come-first-served basis, Monday through Friday. Netcare Access provides 24-hour crisis intervention and assessment services to Franklin County residents experiencing a mental health or alcohol/drug crisis. For more information on Netcare's services, contact us at:**

**Netcare Corporation  
199 S. Central Avenue  
Columbus, OH 43223**

**Administrative line: (614) 274-9500**

**Assessment West: (614) 278-0122**

**Assessment East: (614) 278-0155**

**24-hour crisis hotline: (614) 276-C.A.R.E. (2273)**

***[www.netcareaccess.org](http://www.netcareaccess.org)***