



# Living with someone with depression?

To see how you can help them, while also taking care of yourself, read on...

## What you should know

- Depression can happen to anyone and is not a sign of weakness.
- It's an illness characterized by persistent sadness and a loss of interest in activities that you normally enjoy, accompanied by difficulty carrying out daily activities.
- People with depression also normally experience several of the following: loss of energy; change in appetite; sleeping more or less; anxiety; reduced concentration; indecisiveness; restlessness; feelings of worthlessness, guilt, or hopelessness; thoughts of self-harm or suicide.
- Depression can be treated. Finding the best course of treatment depends on the severity of the condition.
- The support of friends and family helps people recover from depression.

## What you can do

- Make it clear that you want to help, listen without judgement, and offer support.
- Find out more about depression – talking to someone you know who has recovered or a local health worker are good places to start.
- Encourage them to seek professional help and offer to go with them to appointments.
- If they're prescribed medication, help them remember to take it.
- Be patient – recovery can take time.
- Help them with everyday tasks and to have regular eating and sleeping patterns.
- Encourage regular exercise and social activities.
- But be mindful that trying to do too much can be stressful and make depression worse.
- Encourage them to focus on the positive, rather than the negative.
- If they're thinking about self-harm, or have already intentionally harmed themselves, don't leave them alone. Seek help from the emergency services or a health-care professional. And remove items such as medicines, sharp objects and firearms.
- Take care of yourself too. Try to find ways to relax and continue doing things you enjoy.

**REMEMBER:** When you live with someone with depression, you can help them recover, but it's important to look after yourself too.

