

## Self-Evaluation for Depression

Depression is defined as an emotional disorder characterized by feelings of persistent sadness, guilt, worthlessness, or dejection; loss of hope; loss of interest in usual activities; or an inability to concentrate. Depression affects both sexes and impacts many Americans some time during their lives. Depression can be caused by severe stress or loss or by genetic, physical, social, and psychological factors.

Sometimes depression is preventable with healthy stress management skills; regular exercise; good eating and sleeping habits; and avoiding the overuse of alcohol, drugs, and caffeine. When depression cannot be prevented, professional treatment can provide relief, bring joy and fulfillment back to life, and prevent recurrences.

The following self-evaluation is provided to help assess whether you may be suffering from depression. (Please note that this self-evaluation does not replace a formal medical/psychiatric evaluation, as many of the following symptoms may be due to other causes.) Circle Y or N.

1. Have you recently experienced a low mood - feeling sad or empty - most of the day, nearly every day? (Note: In children and adolescents, mood can appear more irritable than depressed.) Y N
2. Have you recently experienced a loss of interest or pleasure in your usual activities? Y N
3. Have you recently experienced significant weight gain or weight loss when not dieting? (Note: In children, consider failure to make expected weight gains.) Y N
4. Have you recently experienced insomnia or other sleep disturbances? Y N
5. Have you recently experienced either hyperactive (restless) behavior or slowed behavior, which is observable by others? Y N
6. Have you recently felt fatigue or loss of energy nearly every day? Y N
7. Have you recently experienced feelings of worthlessness or excessive or inappropriate guilt nearly every day? Y N
8. Has your ability to think, concentrate, or make decisions been diminished nearly every day recently? Y N
9. Have you recently experienced recurrent thoughts of death or suicide? Y N

If you answer yes to Question 9 or if you answer yes to four or more other questions, we recommend that you receive an assessment from a trained professional.