

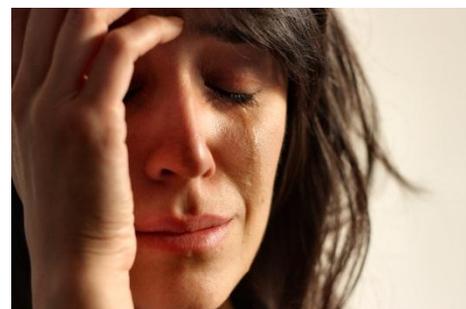
DEPRESSION AND MOOD DISORDERS



Depression is one of the most common mental health problems. One in five people experience depression at some stage of their lives.

What is Depression and Bi-polar Disorder?

- **Depression:** a depressed mood that lasts for at least two weeks. This may also be referred to as clinical depression or uni-polar depression. Depression significantly affects the way someone feels, causing a persistent lowering of mood and it is often accompanied by a range of other physical and psychological symptoms that can interfere with the way a person is able to function in their everyday life.
- **Bi-polar:** involves periods of feeling low (depressed) and high (manic). It is also known as manic depression, and is characterised by cycling mood changes. Episodes of depression alternate with *manic episodes*, which can include impulsive behavior, hyperactivity, rapid speech, and little to no sleep.



Depression is different from normal sadness in that it engulfs your day-to-day life, interfering with your ability to work, study, eat, sleep, and have fun.

Signs and symptoms of depression include but are not limited to:

- Depressed mood for a prolonged period of time
- Lack of energy and tiredness
- Loss of interest and enjoyment in normal activities
- Reduced self-esteem and self confidence
- Feelings of guilt and worthlessness
- Bleak and pessimistic views of the future
- Disturbed sleep and/or appetite
- Reduced libido
- Reduced motivation
- Reduced concentration and memory
- Difficulty in making decisions
- Suicidal thoughts

What causes depression?

Depression can manifest itself as a result of a number of factors that can include but are not limited to:

- **Biological/Genetic Risk Factors:** Imbalances in the brain's neuro-chemical systems can result in depression, as can a family history of depression.
- **Social/Psychological Risk Factors:** developing a long term illness; long term relationship or family conflict; problems in personal, social or work relationships; overwhelming feelings of stress at work; recent death of a loved one.

If you (or someone you know) are exhibiting signs of depression, you should seek help. Consider talking to your doctor or contact an organisation that can provide advice and support: www.beyondblue.org.au & www.mhfa.com.au. If changes need to be made in the workplace to support you, talk to your supervisor or to your [HR Adviser](#).

The University's Employee Assistance Program (<http://www.deakin.edu.au/hr/ohs/assistance.php>) may also assist.