

6 Tips to Manage Depression: For Teens

Many teens with significant depression reach out for help. You are not alone. Make sure you ask for support when you need it! There are also many things you can do to help manage depression.

CONNECT

- Make a list of people you can talk to and spend time with.
- Make plans to do things that are enjoyable with your loved ones.
- Let your loved ones help you when you need it. They care about you!
- Don't isolate yourself.
- Limit screen time. Too much social media can worsen your mood.

KEEP MOVING

- Think about activities you enjoy and can maintain (eg. walking, running, team sports, biking).
- Get moving! Start small if you need to - even 10 minutes per day can make a big difference! Work toward exercising 60 minutes each day. Do things you enjoy and can maintain.
- Do moderate (eg. brisk walking) to vigorous activity (eg. jogging, biking) three days a week.
- Exercise or play sports with other people.

SLEEP WELL

- Aim for 8-10 hours of sleep every night.
- Take a nap in the day if you need, but make it less than 30 minutes.
- Create a good night time routine (like listening to music, showering, journaling).
- Make your room dark, quiet and cool.
- Be active during the day.
- Avoid caffeine, especially after noon.
- Turn off devices 60-90 minutes before bed because screens emit a stimulating blue light that will disrupt your sleep pattern.

BE PRESENT

- Avoid using substances like cigarettes, vape, alcohol and marijuana.
- Don't "self-medicate" with substances. They can make your mood worse.

Sometimes life feels too hard and you might feel like not doing anything. Depression can make you unmotivated. Be kind to yourself! Talk to your support persons or mental health professional for help.



EAT PLANTS

- Don't skip meals!
- Choose more fruits and vegetables, whole grains, legumes.
- Choose less dairy and meats.
- Avoid added sugars, processed foods, soft drinks and fats.
- Drink plenty of water during the day.

KEEP CALM

- Practice your favorite stress management skills regularly.
- Learn new coping skills (like music, drawing, walking, prayer).
- Learn mindfulness.
- Learn relaxation techniques (like breathing, muscle relaxation).
- Be outside in natural light.