



# MDwise

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## Depression and Suicide

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### Topic Overview

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Depression is a disease. It's caused by changes in chemicals in the brain that are called neurotransmitters. Depression isn't a character flaw, and it doesn't mean you are bad or weak. It doesn't mean you are going crazy.

People who are very depressed can feel so bad that they think about suicide. They may feel hopeless, helpless, and worthless. But most people who think about suicide don't want to die. They may see suicide as a way to solve a problem or end their pain.

### What to watch for

It is hard to know if someone is thinking about suicide. But past history or events may make suicide more likely.

Things that can make suicide more likely include:

- Being male.
- Having had a family member attempt suicide or kill himself or herself.
- Having access to a firearm.
- Having been sexually abused.
- Drinking a lot of alcohol or using drugs.
- Having attempted suicide before.
- Feeling hopeless.
- Other mental health problems, such as bipolar disorder or schizophrenia.

Warning signs of suicide include someone:

- Planning to or saying he or she wants to hurt or kill himself or herself or someone else.
- Talking, writing, reading, or drawing about death, including writing suicide notes and speaking of items that can cause physical harm, such as pills, guns, or knives, especially if this behavior is new.
- Saying he or she has no hope, feels trapped, or sees no point in "going on."

Read more about warning signs of suicide.

# Credits

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**Current as of: June 16, 2021**

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RR2022\_190 (11/2022)