

# WHAT IS DEPRESSION?

Depression is a normal reaction to loss, stress, and hardship. It affects how you feel, think, and handle daily activities, such as sleeping, eating, working, and connecting to others. It often manifests as lack of interest in activities that were once pleasurable and feelings of hopelessness, helplessness, or worthlessness that persist for at least two weeks.

## WHAT DOES IT FEEL LIKE?

Depression can feel different for everyone, but usually we can sense depression physiologically and psychologically.

### Physiological Symptoms:

- Muscle fatigue
- Loss of energy
- Aches and pains
- Bodily heaviness or the feeling of being weighed down
- Changes in appetite, nausea, or digestion problems
- Sudden weight loss or weight gain
- Difficulty sleeping, early-morning awakening, or oversleeping
- Reduction in physical movement



### Psychological Symptoms:

- Diminished ability to think, concentrate, remember, or indecisiveness
- Persistent sad, anxious, or “empty” mood
- Rumination of thought
- Excessive crying or emotional blunting
- Irritability or lack of control of emotions
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, or helplessness
- Loss of interest or pleasure, isolation
- Thoughts of death and suicide, or plans of suicide attempts

## IS IT NORMAL?

Depression is a normal reaction to many difficult situations; however, when depression continues for more than two weeks and causes problems with normal everyday functioning, it may be considered a disorder.

Important questions to consider:

- Have my symptoms lasted more than two weeks?
- How much does my depression get in the way of living my life fully?