

Major Depressive Disorder

Diagnostic Criteria

To be diagnosed with clinical depression, you must experience five of nine symptoms almost every day, all day for at least two weeks:

1. **Depressed mood** (feeling sad, empty or hopeless) or **irritable mood**
2. **Lack of interest or pleasure in any activities, even ones you used to love** (also referred to as anhedonia)
3. **Significant weight loss or gain without dieting** and/or **increase or decrease in appetite**
4. **Insomnia** (typically terminal insomnia, where you fall asleep easily but wake up early and can't fall back asleep) or **sleeping too much**
5. **Restlessness and agitation** or **slower-than-usual movements**
6. **Fatigue** or **lack of energy**
7. **Feeling worthless** and/or **feeling very guilty without reason**
8. **Difficulty thinking and concentrating** and/or **trouble making decisions**
9. **Thoughts of suicide** (If you need support right now, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255 or reach the Crisis Text Line by texting "START" to 741741.)

Depending on how disruptive your symptoms are to your daily life and how long they last, your depression may be classified as:

- Mild
- Moderate
- Severe
- Persistent



You can also be diagnosed with a depression "specifier" that signifies your depression is accompanied by additional symptoms of other mental health issues, such as:

- **Anxious distress**, including feeling "keyed up," restless or worrying a lot
- **Mixed features**, such as grandiosity or fast-moving thoughts usually associated with a manic or hypomanic episode
- **Melancholic features**, or a major loss of pleasure along with feeling empty, struggling more in the morning and weight loss
- **Psychotic features**, when your depression symptoms include delusions or hallucinations
- **Seasonal pattern**, often referred to as seasonal depression, when your mood dips with certain seasons like winter or summer

Source: Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders