Depression not only affects your brain and behavior—it affects your entire body. Depression has been linked with other health problems, including diabetes. Dealing with more than one health problem at a time can be difficult, so proper treatment is important.
What is depression?
Major depressive disorder, or depression, is a serious mental illness. Depression interferes with your daily life and routine and reduces your quality of life. About 6.7 percent of U.S. adults ages 18 and older have depression.1

Signs and Symptoms of Depression
- Ongoing sad, anxious, or empty feelings
- Feeling hopeless
- Feeling guilty, worthless, or helpless
- Feeling irritable or restless
- Loss of interest in activities or hobbies once enjoyable, including sex
- Feeling tired all the time
- Difficulty concentrating, remembering details, or making decisions
- Difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep, a condition called insomnia, or sleeping all the time
- Overeating or loss of appetite
- Thoughts of death and suicide or suicide attempts
- Ongoing aches and pains, headaches, cramps, or digestive problems that do not ease with treatment.

For more information, see the NIMH booklet on Depression at http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/depression/index.shtml.

What is diabetes?
Diabetes is an illness that affects the way the body uses digested food for energy. Most of the food we eat is broken down into a type of sugar called glucose. Glucose is an important source of fuel for the body and the main source of fuel for the brain. The body also produces a hormone called insulin. Insulin helps cells throughout the body absorb glucose and use it for energy. Diabetes reduces or destroys the body’s ability to make or use insulin properly. Without insulin, glucose builds up in the blood, and the body’s cells are starved of energy.
How are depression and diabetes linked?

Studies show that depression and diabetes may be linked, but scientists do not yet know whether depression increases the risk of diabetes or diabetes increases the risk of depression. Current research suggests that both cases are possible. In addition to possibly increasing your risk for depression, diabetes may make symptoms of depression worse. The stress of managing diabetes every day and the effects of diabetes on the brain may contribute to depression.1,2 In the United States, people with diabetes are twice as likely as the average person to have depression.3

At the same time, some symptoms of depression may reduce overall physical and mental health, not only increasing your risk for diabetes but making diabetes symptoms worse. For example, overeating may cause weight gain, a major risk factor for diabetes. Fatigue or feelings of worthlessness may cause you to ignore a special diet or medication plan needed to control your diabetes, worsening your diabetes symptoms. Studies have shown that people with diabetes and depression have more severe diabetes symptoms than people who have diabetes alone.4

How is depression treated in people who have diabetes?

Depression is diagnosed and treated by a health care provider. Treating depression can help you manage your diabetes and improve your overall health. Scientists report that for people who have diabetes and depression, treating depression can raise mood levels and increase blood glucose control.5 Recovery from depression takes time but treatments are effective. At present, the most common treatments for depression include:

- Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), a type of psychotherapy or talk therapy that helps people change negative thinking styles and behaviors that may contribute to their depression
- Antidepressants, a class of medications that help increase levels of certain chemicals in the brain, called monoamine oxidase inhibitors (MAOIs), tricyclics, selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs), and serotonin and norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors (SNRIs)

Antidepressants are not right for everyone. They are often tried in combination to help improve your mood. Some antidepressants may cause weight gain as a side effect and may not be the best depression treatment if weight gain is a problem for you. Antidepressants may take several weeks to work, may need to be combined with ongoing talk therapy, or may need to be changed or adjusted to achieve the best results.

For more information, see the NIMH booklet on Depression at http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/depression/index.shtml. If you think you are depressed or know someone who is, don’t lose hope. Help is available. To find a provider about side effects, possible drug interactions, and other treatment options, visit the U.S. Food and Drug Administration website at http://www.fda.gov. Not everyone responds to treatment the same way. Medications can take several weeks to work, may need to be combined with ongoing talk therapy, or may need to be changed or adjusted to achieve the best results.
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Depression has been linked with diabetes. Dealing with more than one health problem at a time can be difficult, so proper treatment for each problem is needed. Depression not only affects your brain and behavior—but it affects your entire body. Depression not only affects your brain and behavior—but it affects your entire body. Depression not only affects your brain and behavior—but it affects your entire body.

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Diabetes is an illness that affects the way the body uses digested food for energy. Most of the food we eat is broken down into glucose, a type of sugar. Glucose is an important source of fuel for the body and the main source of fuel for the brain. The body also produces a hormone called insulin. Insulin helps the body use glucose for energy. Without insulin, glucose builds up in the blood, the body’s cells are starved of energy, and the body’s ability to make or use glucose for energy is reduced or destroyed. Diabetes may make symptoms of depression worse. The stress of managing diabetes every day and the effects of diabetes on other health problems, including sex, can cause you to ignore a special diet or medication plan needed to control your diabetes, worsening your diabetes symptoms. The stress of having more severe diabetes symptoms than people who have diabetes alone. Fatigue or feelings of worthlessness may influence decisions that do not ease with treatment.

What is depression?

Depression is a mental illness that affects your mood. Many people have depression at some point in their lives. Depression interferes with your daily life and routine and reduces your quality of life. About 6.7 percent of U.S. adults ages 18 and older have depression.

Signs and Symptoms of Depression

- Difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep, a condition called insomnia, or sleeping all the time
- Gaining or losing weight
- Overeating or loss of appetite
- Fatigue or feeling tired all the time
- Thoughts of death and suicide or suicide attempts
- Difficulty concentrating, remembering details, or making important decisions
- Loss of interest in activities or hobbies once enjoyable
- Feeling guilty, worthless, or helpless
- Feeling hopeless
- Feeling irritable or restless
- Feeling sad, anxious, or empty feelings
- Difficulty sleeping

How are depression and diabetes linked?

Studies have shown that people with diabetes and depression have more severe diabetes symptoms than people who have diabetes alone. Diabetes may make symptoms of depression worse. The stress of managing diabetes every day and the effects of diabetes on other health problems, including sex, can cause you to ignore a special diet or medication plan needed to control your diabetes, worsening your diabetes symptoms. The stress of having more severe diabetes symptoms than people who have diabetes alone. Fatigue or feelings of worthlessness may influence decisions that do not ease with treatment.

How is depression treated in people who have diabetes?

For people who have diabetes and depression, treating depression can improve your overall health. Scientists report that for people who have diabetes and depression, treating depression can help you manage your diabetes and improve your overall health. Scientists report that for people who have diabetes and depression, treating depression can help you manage your diabetes and improve your overall health. Scientists report that for people who have diabetes and depression, treating depression can help you manage your diabetes and improve your overall health.

Some antidepressants may cause weight gain as a side effect and may not be the best depression treatment if you have diabetes. These include:

- Tricyclics
- Monoamine oxidase inhibitors (MAOIs)
- Paroxetine (Paxil), an SSRI
- Mirtazapine (Remeron)

While currently available depression treatments are generally well tolerated and safe, talk with your health care provider about side effects, possible drug interactions, and other treatment options. For the latest information on medications, visit the U.S. Food and Drug Administration website at http://www.fda.gov. Not everyone responds to treatment the same way. Medications can take several weeks to work, may need to be combined with ongoing talk therapy, or may need to be changed or adjusted to minimize side effects and achieve the best results. More information about depression treatments can be found on the NIMH website at http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/depression/how-is-depression-detected-and-treated.shtml. If you think you are depressed or know someone who is, don’t lose hope. Seek help for depression.

- Selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor (SSRI), a type of antidepressant medication that includes citalopram (Celexa), sertraline (Zoloft), and fluoxetine (Prozac)
- Serotonin and norepinephrine reuptake inhibitor (SNRI), a type of antidepressant medication similar to SSRI that includes venlafaxine (Effexor) and duloxetine (Cymbalta).

While currently available depression treatments are generally well tolerated and safe, talk with your health care provider about side effects, possible drug interactions, and other treatment options. For the latest information on medications, visit the U.S. Food and Drug Administration website at http://www.fda.gov. Not everyone responds to treatment the same way. Medications can take several weeks to work, may need to be combined with ongoing talk therapy, or may need to be changed or adjusted to minimize side effects and achieve the best results. More information about depression treatments can be found on the NIMH website at http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/depression/how-is-depression-detected-and-treated.shtml. If you think you are depressed or know someone who is, don’t lose hope. Seek help for depression.
For More Information on Depression
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