

## DEPRESSION

### What is Depression?

Depression is when you feel sad and / or lose interest or pleasure in activities that you used to enjoy. These feelings may last longer than usual and affect your health, work and relationships. Depression can become a serious medical illness and affects people from any social, cultural or economic background. Depression may be worsened by other health conditions.

### How do I know if I have Depression?

Over the last 2 weeks, have you faced the following issues?

- (a) Little interest or pleasure in doing things
- (b) Feeling down, depressed or hopeless

If yes, please consult a doctor or nurse for further assessment.

### What causes Depression?

It can be one or a combination of any of the following:

- Stress and difficulties coping with your feelings
- Family history
- Stress from around you (e.g., work, relationship, unsafe living conditions, financial)
- Past experiences in your life that caused high stress level
- Some health conditions (e.g. Diabetes and stroke)

### How is Depression treated?

- Your healthcare team will assess and carry out lab tests to rule out other health conditions that may present as symptoms of Depression.
- If diagnosed, Depression can be treated with medication, psychotherapy or a combination of both.
- Successful treatment can reduce symptoms of Depression so you can return to your previous healthy mental state.

## What can I do if I feel depressed?

Continue to look after your health and go easy on yourself. For example:

- Eat a healthy meal
- Get enough quality sleep
- Do regular exercise
- Break up large tasks into small parts, set priorities and do what you can
- Spend time with people and talk with a trusted friend or relative
- Avoid self-medication
- Avoid drinking alcohol and smoking

If you are taking an anti-depressant medication prescribed by your doctor, it may take 2 to 4 weeks for your condition to improve.

## Who can I reach out to?

- Institute of Mental Health Helpline – 6389 2222 **(24 hours)**
- Mindline – 1 771 **(24 hours)**
- Samaritans of Singapore – 1 767 **(24 hours)**
- Singapore Association for Mental Health – 1800 283 7019 **(Mondays – Fridays 9am - 1pm, 2 - 6pm)**
- Visit your nearest GP or polyclinic