

Health Tips for Controlling Depression

1. Think positively

The more you can tell yourself that things are going to get better, the more it becomes a reality. Be hopeful and you have the power to create a more hopeful situation for yourself. Tell yourself that you don't want to be depressed any longer and make the commitment to work toward brighter days. Know that things can go awry, and do go awry, but that it is a part of nature. What you can control is how you react to life around you, and if you do so with a positive attitude as much as possible, you will be well on your way to recovery.

2. Surround yourself with positive company

Being isolated can make you lonely and can deepen depression. Close relationships are important because you can share your thoughts and feelings, listen and be listened to. Even if you don't feel like keeping up with social activities, make the effort to attend functions or spend time with trusted friends and family. You have laughs and love to look forward to with others. You merely have to share yourself and put yourself in the company of people you enjoy.

3. Talk about what you're going through

It is easy for people to suppress their feelings when they're going through difficult times. However, sometimes when you talk about it and share your feelings, it feels like the weight is lifted off of your shoulders. Sometimes crying and getting something off your chest is healthy. It is appropriate to confide in close friends and family, or if it feels more comfortable you can seek out the help of a professional counselor. Don't be afraid of saying what's on your mind. Honesty is important in dealing with your emotional issues.

4. Exercise

Working out is an excellent way of coping with depression. Not only does it physiologically make you feel better by increasing circulation and putting your hormones in balance, but it also makes you feel good mentally and emotionally. There's nothing like working toward a goal of looking better, because as you reach these goals your energy and your self-confidence go up.

5. Start a new project

If you are feeling depressed, you might want to consider trying something new or starting a project. Whether it's going to a new exercise class, taking up gardening or knitting, or finally updating your resume, working on something that you want to do is bound to uplift your spirits. The possibilities are endless, and you will feel great when you accomplish your goal.

6. Avoid drugs and alcohol

Drugs and alcohol have a tendency to deepen depression, and they should be avoided when you are already feeling down. Also, if you are on antidepressant medication, they can interfere with the treatment. Alcohol is actually a depressant, as are other drugs such as heroin, morphine, hydrocodone, and other opioids. The feelings of euphoria associated with drugs and alcohol are temporary, and it is healthy to recognize that they will not solve your problems, but will more likely make them worse.

7. Use relaxation techniques

Sometimes depression comes from stress. Getting more rest can help make you feel better, and there are a lot of different methods you can try to simply relax your mind. Different types of yoga, meditation, affirmations, and breathing techniques are a good place to start. Try different methods to see what works best for you.

8. Help someone else

When you step out of yourself to help another, it can often give you perspective and gratitude for the things that you have. Whether it is volunteering at a homeless shelter or a free clinic, lending a hand to your brother when he's moving, or teaching your nephew how to fish, doing things for others gets your mind off of your troubles and on to other things.

9. Seek out laughter

My mother always said that 'laughter is the best remedy.' I've found it to be true. If you're looking for a quick and easy mood lifter, go to your local movie rental store and pick out a classic comedy, a romantic comedy, or some stand-up to you smile. If you're feeling courageous, you can get tickets to a local comedy club (makes for a great date).

10. Treatment

You can try remedial treatment for depression if it seems to be lingering longer than you would like. If you visit a psychiatrist, they can prescribe antidepressant treatments such as Effexor, Prozac, Lexapro, and Pristiq. You can also look for nonprescription supplements that have been used for depression, such as 5-HTP, St. John's Wort, or Yerba Mate tea.