

SINGING THE BLUES?

Mayo Clinic in Scottsdale Provides 10 Tips for Detecting Depression

By Robert R. Orford, M.D., C.M.

Director, Executive Health Program at Mayo Clinic in Scottsdale, Ariz.

If you've been feeling down, hopeless or stressed for a couple of weeks or more, you may be one of the 14 million Americans who suffer from depression. The added stress of the holidays may be more stress than you can bear alone, especially if just getting through each ordinary day seems like a chore.

How do you know if what you're dealing with is depression or just a case of the blues? The key is the frequency with which you experience these feelings. Although you may experience many of these symptoms occasionally, if you're having them most of the time, it may be depression. Following are 10 of the most common signs of depression:

- **Loss of interest in normal daily activities** — You lose interest in or pleasure from activities you used to enjoy.
- **Depressed mood** — You feel sad, helpless and may have frequent crying spells.
- **Sleep disturbances** — Sleeping too much or having problems sleeping can be a sign you're depressed. Waking in the middle of the night or early in the morning and not being able to get back to sleep are typical.
- **Impaired thinking or concentration** — You may have trouble concentrating or making decisions, as well as problems with memory.

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- **Significant weight loss or gain** — An increased or reduced appetite and an unexplained weight gain or loss of more than five percent of your normal weight can indicate depression.
- **Agitation or slowing of body movements** — You may seem restless, agitated, irritable and easily annoyed.
- **Fatigue** — You feel weariness and lack of energy nearly every day. You may feel as tired in the morning as you did when you went to bed the night before.
- **Low self esteem** — You feel worthless and have excessive guilt.
- **Less interest in sex** — If you were sexually active before developing depression, you may notice a dramatic decrease in your level of interest in having sexual relations.
- **Persistent negative thoughts** — You consistently have a negative view of yourself, your situation and the future.

Still not sure if it's depression? Visit the web at www.MayoClinic.com and enter "depression self assessment" on the search line for a screening test which can help you get appropriate treatment. This holiday season, give yourself the gift of health by seeking treatment and looking forward to a positive new year.

Robert R. Orford, M.D., C.M. is Director of the Mayo Clinic Executive Health Program in Scottsdale, Ariz. Mayo Clinic Executive Health Programs are located in Scottsdale; Rochester, Minn.; and Jacksonville, Fla.

To schedule an appointment, call 480-301-4141.