

# Remission and Relapse Information



## You can avoid possible relapse by adhering to your treatment plan.

Depression is a common illness that affects up to 10 percent of the population. The treatment of depression varies from person to person. If not treated properly, it can last longer. It's important to understand your depression treatment and the stages you may experience.

### When can you expect to feel better?

After one to two months of treatment for depression, you should begin to feel more like your healthy self again. We call this remission.

### What are the signs of remission?

- You should be sleeping well at night (not too much and not too little) and eating well (again, not too much and not too little).
- You should be able to concentrate when you are working, reading or watching television or a movie.
- You should be involved in the pleasurable activities you enjoyed prior to your depression.

### When should you stop treatment?

Even though you may be feeling better, it is important to continue your treatment as recommended by your doctor or therapist. They will advise you how long to continue treatment so that you remain in remission and do not have a relapse into depression.

A common problem is discontinuing treatment too soon. It is important to monitor your symptoms. If you have discontinued or decreased your treatment too early (for example, reducing the dose of medication you are taking), you may begin to experience symptoms of depression again.

### How will you know if you are relapsing?

Some indications that you may be relapsing include:

- Waking up at night and not being able to return to sleep or feeling fatigued.
- Losing interest in or being unable to participate in your usual activities.

- Having no appetite or beginning to overeat.
- Being unable to concentrate or focus when you are working, reading or watching television.
- Not getting along with others at work, at home or at school.
- Beginning to feel down or blue again.

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### What should you do if you are beginning to experience any of these symptoms?

- Call your doctor or therapist and schedule a follow-up examination.
- Make sure you are following your treatment plan, including taking your medication as directed and/or attending counseling sessions as advised.
- Refer back to your self-management plan and be sure to engage in the activities that helped you previously.

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