

Recovering from depression

Follow your treatment plan to help keep depression from coming back.

Treatment for depression can be different for each person. It can also last longer if not treated properly. It's important to understand your treatment plan and the stages you may go through.

When can you expect to feel better?

After one to two months of treatment, you should begin to feel more like your healthy self again. This is called **remission**.

Signs of remission include:

- Sleeping well at night (not too much or too little)
- Eating well (not too much or too little)
- Being able to concentrate when you are working, reading or watching television
- Enjoying the activities you enjoyed before your depression

When should you stop treatment?

Everyone's treatment is different. Your doctor or therapist will tell you when you can stop. Do not stop once you are feeling better. You will probably stay with treatment for a while after you start feeling better to keep your depression from coming back.

If your depression comes back, this is called relapse. Many people try to stop treatment too soon and relapse.

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How will you know if you are relapsing?

You might be relapsing if you:

- Wake up at night and are not able to go back to sleep
- Feel very tired whether you sleep or not
- Lose interest in doing your usual activities
- Lose your appetite or overeat
- Are unable to concentrate or focus when you work, read or watch television
- Have trouble getting along with people at work, home or school
- Start to feel down or blue again

Follow your treatment plan to help avoid relapse. Do not change your treatment without getting your doctor's approval first.

What should you do if you notice any signs of relapse?

- Call your doctor or therapist to set up an exam or visit.
- Keep following your treatment plan. Take your medication as directed. Go to all of your counseling sessions.
- Refer back to your self-care plan (things your doctor said to do every day or week). Be sure to keep trying the activities that helped you before.

