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Is it depression? Figure out and get help

Need to talk with someone who understands? **Text or call 988** for the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. People who want to help are there to talk 24/7.

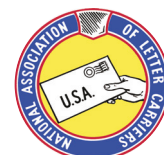
Feeling sad is a part of life. Sometimes, it can be hard to know if you are simply feeling sad or if you are truly depressed. Learning the difference is the first step toward feeling more in control of your health. Sadness is usually brief. It lasts hours to a few days at most. Sadness goes away without needing special treatment. Depression is deeper. It lasts longer than sadness. When deep sadness goes on for 2 weeks or more, you might have depression.

Depression is a serious mental health issue that needs treatment. Do you recognize these common symptoms?

- Changes in eating (no interest in food or eating too much) or digestion issues
- Changes in sleep (too much or can't sleep) or feeling very tired
- Anger, anxiety, shame, feeling hopeless, helpless, worthless, empty, or numb
- Loss of interest in favorite activities
- Trouble focusing, thinking clearly, or making decisions
- Aches, pain, headaches
- Thoughts of death or suicide

If you have any of these, call your doctor or Program Nurse. Getting help sooner rather than later can help get you on the path to feeling better. You deserve it.

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How to manage stress

Stress is a part of life. It is the body's response to a change, threat, or problem. Daily life can bring normal short-term stress, like having a flat tire or spilled drink. Not all stress is bad. Fun events, such as the thrill of riding a roller coaster, can also cause stress. But too much stress can be harmful.

Any type of stress can cause increased heart rate, higher blood pressure, and faster breathing. Other signs may be dry mouth, slow digestion, muscle tension, and irritability. How you manage stress is important for your health. It can help you to feel better.

Signs that you may be under too much stress can include:

- always feeling tired
- not enjoying small pleasures
- trouble sleeping
- aches and pains
- feeling angry or irritable

Tips to deal with stress

There are many things you can do on your own to manage stress. These include making healthy lifestyle choices, such as:

- eating well-balanced meals and staying hydrated
- limiting alcohol and caffeine, and not smoking
- exercising on a regular basis
- striving to get good quality sleep

All of these things can help you feel more in control. Also, let friends and family know if you feel overwhelmed and need help. Your Program Nurse can help too.

May is Mental Health Awareness Month, so spread the word. It is a great time to reach out to others and talk about mental health. You can also talk to your Program Nurse to learn more.

Taking a break from your bone loss medicines

Bone health is an important part of your overall health. Keeping your bones strong allows you to live an active life. If you are living with thin and weak bones, you may have a bone disease called osteoporosis. This means there is a higher risk of fractures or breaks in your bones. One way to reduce bone fractures and improve bone strength is with bisphosphonate treatment.

Bisphosphonates are a type of medicine that slows the breakdown of your bones. This can reduce the risk of fractures. Keep in mind that taking bisphosphonates is only one part of keeping your bones healthy. They work best when you are also taking the right amount of calcium and vitamin D with regular exercise.

With this treatment, your doctor will monitor your progress. At some point your doctor may suggest that you take a break from your bisphosphonate medicines. This is called a bisphosphonate holiday. Talk to your doctor before making any changes to your medicines.

Why take a break from bisphosphonates?

Bisphosphonate holidays are short breaks in the use of bisphosphonate medicines. Your doctor may want to balance the benefits of these medicines while keeping any risks low. Long-term use of bisphosphonates can sometimes have side effects. The length and frequency of the breaks will vary. Your doctor will check your bone health often to make sure that you are still healthy.

What are other ways to keep your bones healthy?

Have questions about bisphosphonate treatment? Talk to your doctor and Program Nurse. Things you may talk about can include:

- Calcium: is important for bone health. It can be found in foods such as dairy and leafy greens.
- Vitamin D: plays an important role in bone strength. Sunlight is a natural source of vitamin D. Your food and supplements can also be helpful.
- Exercise: mainly weight-bearing exercises help bone growth and bone strength. At least 30 minutes of exercise 3 times per week is best.

Stay in the know and talk with your doctor about your bone health. Taking care of your bones can help you stay healthy and active.