



Blue Cross
Blue Shield
Blue Care Network
of Michigan

Confidence comes with every card.®

- I feel tired and helpless.
- I'm sad most of every day.
- I don't take pleasure in family, friends or hobbies.
- I have trouble sleeping.
- This has been going on for some time.

Maybe I'm depressed.

Understanding depression

Everyone feels sad sometimes, but these feelings usually pass after a few days.

When you have depression, the symptoms don't go away. Eventually they can affect your quality of life.

Depression is a serious illness that affects your mind and body. Don't put off getting help.

Signs of depression

You may have depression if you have one or more of these symptoms:

- Feeling sad or empty
- Feeling hopeless
- Feeling very tired
- Not being able to concentrate or remember details
- Not being able to sleep, or sleeping too much
- Overeating, or not wanting to eat at all
- Thoughts of suicide

What's the next step?

If you have any of the signs of depression, tell your provider.

If you're a Blue Care Network member, you can call a behavioral health specialist without a referral from your provider.

How depression is treated

- Improving diet and avoiding alcohol and other mind-altering substances can help lift your mood of depression.
- Physical exercise can help turn your mood around.
- The support of family and friends can be very important, reminding you that you're not alone.
- Talk therapy can help treat depression by teaching you new ways of thinking and dealing with your emotions.

Medications can help

When depression affects your ability to function in daily life and nothing else is working, antidepressant medications can help. These medicines can restart your mental well-being. Keep in mind that:

- It may take time to find the antidepressants that work best for you.
- It's important to take the medicine as prescribed and not to stop it on your own; some antidepressants take several weeks to work.
- Most people start to feel like their "old" selves again after three to six weeks.
- Starting talk therapy along with medication can help improve the symptoms of depression.

To find a behavioral health provider in your area:

- Blue Cross commercial members, call **1-800-762-2382**
- Medicare Plus BlueSM PPO members, call **1-888-803-4960**
- BCN commercial, BCN AdvantageSM HMO and BCN AdvantageSM HMO-POS members, call **1-800-482-5982**

What's next?

If you're not feeling better after six to eight weeks of treatment and have tried multiple medications, you may need a more intense level of care. This doesn't mean that you'll never feel better but that you need specialized care to get the most improvement in your symptoms.



Resources

The following resources can help you find answers online and in your neighborhood.

Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance

Information about depression from people who live with it
dbsalliance.org*

Anxiety and Depression Association of America

Help in finding or starting a depression support group in your area
adaa.org*

National Institute of Mental Health

Offering a detailed explanation of depression and how it can be treated
nimh.nih.gov*

HelpGuide.org

Connecting you to online resources
helpguide.org*

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