

- **Try to be active every day—especially if you don't feel like it!** Physical activity is very good for mental health problems like depression because it can boost your mood and help you cope with worry or stress. Even small changes, like going for a short walk after school, can make a big difference.
- **Try to eat well.** When you don't feel well or don't have a lot of energy, it's easy to reach for options that aren't very healthy. Aim for good nutrition to keep you fueled throughout the day, and talk to your doctor or mental health care team if you have a hard time building a healthy relationship with food.
- **Try to find ways to relax.** You can try listening to music, watching a funny video, going for a walk outside, or whatever helps you. There are even apps and websites to help you try relaxation skills like meditation and mindfulness, such as [www.keltymentalhealth.ca/breathr](http://www.keltymentalhealth.ca/breathr) and [www.headspace.com](http://www.headspace.com). See [www.heretohelp.bc.ca/wellness-modules](http://www.heretohelp.bc.ca/wellness-modules) for more tips on mindfulness and stress management. Be mindful of using alcohol or other drugs to relax—they can make mental health problems like depression harder to manage.

## LEARN MORE

**HeretoHelp** at [www.heretohelp.bc.ca](http://www.heretohelp.bc.ca) has information about many different mental health problems. You can also read personal stories, find self-care ideas in the Wellness Modules, learn more about treatments, and take screening self-tests to check your mental health.

The **Mood Disorders Association of BC** at [www.mdabc.net](http://www.mdabc.net) supports people who experience a mood disorder like depression. They have services like a psychiatry clinic for young people, different workshops, and a directory of support groups around BC.

**Blue Wave**, a program from the Canadian Mental Health Association's BC Division, helps youth take charge of their mental health and share their voice. Visit [www.bluewavebc.ca](http://www.bluewavebc.ca) to find information and resources, learn about wellness courses and bursaries, or get involved.

Visit **Mindcheck** at [www.mindcheck.ca](http://www.mindcheck.ca) for information about mental health, resources, and support. You can take a quiz to check your mood, and their self-care resources include several apps and websites you can try on your own.

## WANT MORE INFO ON DEPRESSION?

This brochure is part of a series on youth and depression. To learn more about depression and what it might look like, see *Learn about Depression: For Youth* at [www.heretohelp.bc.ca/for-youth](http://www.heretohelp.bc.ca/for-youth).

FOR YOUTH

# DEALING WITH DEPRESSION



**Canadian Mental Health Association**  
British Columbia  
*Mental health for all*



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British Columbia  
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The Canadian Mental Health Association, BC Division is proud to be affiliated with HeretoHelp. HeretoHelp is a project of the BC Partners for Mental Health and Addictions Information, a group of non-profit agencies providing good-quality information to help individuals and families maintain or improve their mental well-being. The BC Partners are funded by BC Mental Health and Substance Use Services, an agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority.

in partnership with



**heretohelp**

Mental health and substance use information you can trust

## GET HELP

Asking for help is not always easy, but it's the first step towards feeling better. Remember that you don't have to have all the answers when you ask for help. You just need to know that something doesn't seem right and you want to know what's going on. Here are some important people you can talk to:

### Parents, caregivers, or other people you trust

Talking with your family can be very hard! It's helpful to think about what you want to say and what you need from your family. You can find tips to help you plan ahead at [www.bluewavebc.ca/take-action/talking-to-your-parents](http://www.bluewavebc.ca/take-action/talking-to-your-parents).



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Depending on your age, you may need a parent or guardian to help you see your doctor or other mental health specialists. If you really don't feel like you can talk to your parents, try talking with another family member, a school counsellor, a friend's parent, or any other adult you trust.

### Your doctor

Your doctor is an important part of your recovery. Your doctor may be able to treat you on their own. If not, your doctor will help you see a mental health specialist like a psychiatrist.

A lot of people feel nervous when they talk with their doctor. It's helpful to think about your doctor's appointment ahead of time so you can make the most of the time. You can find tips to help you plan ahead and talk with your doctor at [www.bluewavebc.ca/take-action/talk-to-your-doctor](http://www.bluewavebc.ca/take-action/talk-to-your-doctor).

### School counsellor, teacher, or school staff member

It's your school counsellor's job to help people who are going through a difficult situation! Your school counsellor can help you find mental health resources and connect you to support. If depression makes it hard to do well at school, your school might be able to help. For example, your school may give you more time to take tests or more time to complete homework. Your school counsellor is also there if you just need to talk to someone.

## FEEL BETTER

Depression is very treatable, and you should expect to feel better. Your exact treatment will depend on your own needs and goals. You and your doctor will work together to find a treatment that works for you. Treatment usually includes a mix of the following:

### Counselling

Counselling or "talk therapy" can help you understand what you are experiencing. Many types of therapy focus on skills to help you manage depression. Two types of therapy are very helpful for depression: cognitive-behavioural therapy (also called CBT) and mindfulness training. They may be just as helpful as medication for most people.

## IF YOU NEED TO TALK WITH SOMEONE RIGHT AWAY

These organizations can help you out at any time, day or night. They're free, they won't share your personal information, and they will keep anything you say safe.

- BC Mental Health Support line at 310-6789 (no area code needed)
- Crisis Line at 1-866-661-3311 (toll-free) or 604-872-3311 (in the Lower Mainland)
- Kids Help Phone at [kidshelpphone.ca](http://kidshelpphone.ca) and 1-800-668-6868

You can chat live online with Youth in BC at [youthinbc.com](http://youthinbc.com). It's available every day from noon to 1am. You can also chat with someone via text message: see [youthspace.ca](http://youthspace.ca).

## Medicine

If other treatments don't help, your doctor may give you medicine. Medicines called antidepressants are usually used to treat depression. If you decide to take medicine, it's important to talk with your doctor about what to expect and follow their instructions as closely as possible.

### Support from others

Depression can make you feel like you're all alone. Support groups are a great way to meet others and see what works for them. Talk to your doctor or contact one of the organizations in the Learn More section to find a support group. If you can't find a support group in your community, you can find support online. A lot of schools are also starting mental health clubs.

### Self-care at home

Self-care is exactly what it sounds like: little things you can do every day to take care of yourself. Self-care doesn't have to be big or complicated to make a difference. In fact, you'll get the most out of it if you try simple activities that you can do every day. We have some suggestions listed below. You can also talk to your doctor or mental health professional for more ideas.

- **Try to get enough sleep every night.** It's hard to feel good when you're tired! And remember teens need more sleep than adults. You can find tips to get a good night's sleep at [www.heretohelp.bc.ca/wellness-modules](http://www.heretohelp.bc.ca/wellness-modules). If you often can't sleep well, talk to your doctor or mental health professional.