

# QuadMed Wellness News

## Beating the blues

**Call Out.** No matter how down you feel, you can get better. Depression is highly treatable, and there are many available resources to contact for help. It is not a sign of personal weakness or a condition that can be willed or wished away. People with depression cannot merely “pull themselves together” and get better. Professional treatment is needed.

If you feel that you are experiencing symptoms of depression you should see your healthcare provider. You can also check with your Human Resources department to see if your employer offers an **Employee Assistance Program (EAP)**. This program is staffed by professional counselors who will help you get control over your depression before it ends up controlling you.

If you are feeling as though you are in crisis, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is a 24/7 service for individuals to be connected to a trained counselor at a suicide crisis center. They will talk with you through any problems, and inform you of mental health services in your area.

**National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:** 1.800.273.TALK

The normal ups and downs of life mean that everyone feels sad or has “the blues” from time to time. Sadness or downswings in mood are normal reactions to life’s struggles, stresses and disappointments. But if feeling blue has taken hold of your life and won’t go away, you may have depression. Depression can make it tough to function and enjoy life like you once did. Just getting through the day can be overwhelming.



## Fast Facts

- Depression can be triggered by a major life event such as the death of a loved one, separation, divorce or a health problem.
- **12-35%** of patients with medical disorders develop depression, or depression can sometimes be caused by an underlying medical disorder or interactions between various drugs.
- Chronic drinking of alcohol, even in moderate amounts, can cause or worsen depression.
- Depression can be mild to severe. Many depressed people describe their condition as “living in a fog”.
- **1 in 10** Americans each year experience depression. That’s more than **18 million** people at any given time.
- About **2 times** as many women as men suffer from this medical condition, but depression does not discriminate; it affects men and women, young and old, and people of all races, cultures and incomes.
- Major depression is **1.5-3 times** more common among first degree biological relatives of those with the disorder than among the general population.
- **2/3<sup>rd</sup>s** of people suffering from depression do not seek necessary treatment.
- **80%** of people who have received treatment for their depression experience significant improvement in their lives.

# Could it be depression?

Over the last two weeks, how often have you been bothered by any of the following problems?

*Circle your answers then add up the total below.*

	Not at all	Several days	More than half the days	Nearly every day
Little interest or pleasure in doing things	0	1	2	3
Feeling down, depressed or hopeless	0	1	2	3
Trouble falling or staying asleep, or sleeping too much	0	1	2	3
Feeling tired or having little energy	0	1	2	3
Poor appetite or overeating	0	1	2	3
Feeling bad about yourself or that you are a failure or have let yourself and others down	0	1	2	3
Trouble concentrating on things, such as reading or watching tv	0	1	2	3
Moving or speaking so slowly that other people have noticed. Or the opposite, being fidgety and restless	0	1	2	3
Thoughts that you would be better off dead, or of hurting yourself	0	1	2	3

Total

- 1-4 Minimal depression
- 5-9 Mild depression
- 10-14 Moderate depression
- 15-19 Moderately severe depression
- 20-27 Severe depression

If your total score was between 10 and 14, you may want to speak with a health care provider about whether you would benefit from specific treatment for depression. If your total score was 15 or more, you are **advised** to speak with a health care provider.