



Depression

{ Arguing more with your partner? Maybe it's not you or your relationship. }

have you noticed you're arguing more with your partner lately and the little things that used to be no big deal have become annoying and irritating? Maybe situations you once overlooked are no longer tolerable and when your partner tries to talk to you about them, instead of listening you withdraw or get defensive. It might be stress from work, hormones or problems with the kids; however, a more likely culprit—especially if you're over age 50—is depression. The signs of depression are often hidden and become more likely with passing years due to changes with brain chemistry and aging.

Depression is sneaky and sometimes the signs are hidden.

Many ignore the symptoms thinking it's part of life or a stage they're going through, but depression is real and you don't grow out of it with passing years—you become more stuck in it. Acknowledging that you are more irritable, pessimistic and/or annoyed with your life is the first step to working through it. Noted below are some of the more common signs to indicate that you or your partner may be depressed.

You begin feeling less optimistic than you once were. Everywhere around you seems gloomier than you remember it being before. You may have been upbeat and sure of yourself in the past, but you've lost that part of yourself.

You no longer sleep well and wake up tired and/or anxious and depressed. Your taste for food changes, too. Food you once loved you no longer have an appetite for. Sometimes it's just the opposite. You find yourself eating or drinking in excess as a way to numb yourself from feelings of hopelessness or resentment.

You no longer are interested in sex or any part of intimacy with your partner.

You feel like an actor. You're acting the part of a happy person around the kids or grandkids, but inside you're crying for help.

You joke about cries for help and quickly recant them. You may see depression as a sign of

weakness, and to admit you're struggling is the toughest part. It's as if you can't accept that you're stuck in this place of sadness.

One of the worst things about depression is feeling alone, guilty and helpless. You feel guilty because you think there is no reason to feel depressed and you can't control it. The first step is recognizing and acknowledging that you're depressed. It's the hardest step; however, it's also the one that holds the key to seeing the light at the end of the tunnel.

Just as you've embraced other issues in your life, depression is a disease and if you face it together with your partner, it can be cured. Telling your family doctor what you're feeling is an excellent place to begin the healing process. ♦



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