

# Patient information from BMJ

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## Depression in children and teenagers: questions to ask your doctor

**If you've been told that your child has depression, you may want to talk to your doctor to find out more. And teenagers with depression may have questions of their own.**

If you're a parent, here are some questions you might want to ask.

- How can I tell if my child is depressed?
- How can I get them to visit the doctor?
- Does my child need treatment? If so, what kind of treatment does he or she need?
- What kinds of talking treatment (psychotherapy) are there?
- When will my child start to feel better?
- If a talking treatment doesn't help, could an antidepressant medicine work?
- How long will my child need to have this treatment?
- What will happen if my child doesn't have this treatment?
- Does the treatment have any side effects or risks?
- Are there any signs of side effects I should watch out for?
- How can my child stop getting depressed again?
- What should I do if I think my child's getting depressed again?
- Is my child likely to become suicidal? Are there any warning signs I should look out for?

If you're a teenager, here are some questions you might want to ask.

- How can I tell if I'm depressed?
- Do I need treatment?
- What treatment do I need?
- What kinds of talking treatment (psychotherapy) are there?
- When will I start to feel better?

## Depression in children and teenagers: questions to ask your doctor

- If a talking treatment doesn't help, can I take an antidepressant?
- How long will I need treatment?
- Does the treatment have any side effects or risks?
- What should I do if I think I'm getting side effects?
- How can I stop getting depressed again?
- What should I do if I think I'm getting depressed again?
- What do I do if I have thoughts about harming myself or about suicide?

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