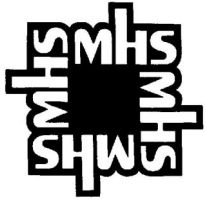


## Resources

**For immediate help, go to emergency room or urgent care.**  
Contact your family physician or insurance provider for a referral.



**Mental Health Services for  
Clark County**  
937-399-9500



**UNITED  
SENIOR SERVICES**  
Active | Involved | Independent  
(937) 323-4948

Visit [www.afsp.org](http://www.afsp.org) for support groups



**Suicide Hotline**  
**1-800-273-8255**  
Veterans press "1"

[www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org)



**Clark, Greene and  
Madison Counties**



24-Hour  
Information  
& Referral

937-323-1400

937-322-5600

## Facts About Depression

- Depression is different from temporary "blues" or grieving the loss of a loved one, in that it lasts longer, and doesn't let up from day to day.
- Symptoms can include anxiety, anger, irritability, loss of pleasure in activities, feelings of guilt, hopelessness and worthlessness, and worsened physical pain.
- Stressful life events, like caring for aging parents and adult children, job loss, military deployment, financial problems, losing relationships, moving, and planning for retirement, can become overwhelming and could require professional help through talk therapy, medication, and lifestyle changes.



Visit [www.mhsc.org](http://www.mhsc.org) or scan this code with your smart phone for a free anonymous mental health screening.

Clark County Suicide  
Prevention Coalition

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Madison County Depression & Suicide  
Prevention Coalition



# A Guide to Fighting

# The Winter Blues

# What Everyone Needs to Know

Expectations may be high for everyone to feel jolly throughout the holiday season. However, some people experience situations and health concerns which may lead to just the opposite, feelings of depression. Physical illnesses like heart disease, diabetes, and chronic pain increase risk of depression. Some individuals may become overwhelmed by the death of a loved one, the loss of a job or important relationship, and might begin to question the meaning of life.

All of these “triggers,” as they are called, can combine with the special pressures and interrupted routines of the holiday season to create an even greater risk of depression. Such feelings may pass as Christmas, Hanukkah and New Year’s Day fade into memory. But, these painful feelings may not pass, and instead, may lead to more serious depression lasting weeks or months. That’s when it’s important to get help.

Most people don’t recognize that increased weariness, sleep problems, or changes in appetite and mood swings are actually signs of depression. Often physical problems and life crises are used to explain away the real symptoms of depression.

Individuals have been taught to just “get over it,” be strong, and not cry when things have gone wrong. It may be really hard to talk about feeling emotional pain, hopelessness or depression. People often feel as if they should just power through it.

Depression is a physical illness rooted in brain chemistry and genetics, and not in personal failings or weakness. So what can be done for any person who develops temporary or more lasting depression? The easiest prescription is simply to get up, get dressed and get out of the house to connect with other people.

## The DOs of managing holiday blues:

**Do** talk to your doctor. Ask about B and D vitamins, and omega-3s. Follow the three basics for good health:

- ◆ eat healthy foods.
- ◆ get plenty of rest.
- ◆ exercise regularly.

**Do** set realistic goals:

- ◆ organize your time.
- ◆ make lists.
- ◆ prioritize.
- ◆ make a budget and follow it.

**Do** create new or different ways to celebrate.

**Do** allow yourself to feel a range of emotions, particularly at holiday times.

**Do** spend time with people who care about you.

**Do** enjoy free community activities.

**Do** spend time with new people or a different set of friends or family. Contact someone with whom you have lost touch.

**Do** have realistic expectations of yourself and others.

**Do** give yourself a break—plan to prepare (or buy) one special meal, purchase one special gift, and take in one special event. The rest can be ordinary, but will seem special because of the time of year and the people you're with.

**Do** something for or with someone else, like a neighbor or pet.

**Do** treat yourself as a special holiday guest.

**Do** limit the number of alcoholic beverages you drink.

**Do** use moderation when indulging in holiday treats.

**Do** focus on the positive. Make a list of positive memories to balance sadness felt about what is different or has changed.

**Do** watch your holiday spending.

**Do** pay close attention to your emotional and physical symptoms which may put you at risk for depression.

**Do** consult with a mental health professional. Treatment is available and affordable.