



# Backdoor Reading From Your Parish Nurse

A S B U R Y U N I T E D M E T H O D I S T C H U R C H

## WHERE TO GET HELP

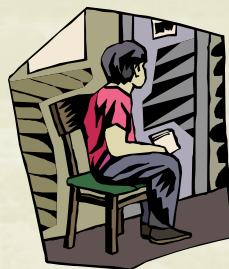
- Family doctors
- Mental health specialists i.e., psychiatrists, social workers, counselors
- Community mental health centers
- Hospitals
- Family services, social agencies, or clergy
- Employee assistance programs

## DEPRESSION & YOUR HEALTH

You probably know depression as a medical condition that primarily affects the brain. Its symptoms include persistent sadness, anxiety, feelings of helplessness, pessimism and worthlessness, and a loss of interest in hobbies and activities enjoyed.

But the psychological symptoms of depression are just the tip of the iceberg. Because the brain is the body's "control center," the effects of depression spread throughout the body, often resulting in problems with sleep, appetite, energy level, sexual

function, motivation, memory and concentration. Performing everyday activities can be an enormous challenge for people who are depressed.



Over 20 million Americans of every age suffer from depression. Women and older people seem to have higher rates of depression, it can strike anyone at any

time. Those who have recently experienced a traumatic event, such as a divorce, job loss, or sudden death of a loved one may be at a higher risk. Depression is not a character flaw, a lack of willpower, or a sign of emotional weakness. You can't simply wish depression away. People who are "stressed out" may think their current situation is to blame. But a prolonged case of the blues may be a chemical imbalance in your brain. That's why treatment is so important—and the sooner the better.

## TIPS FOR COPING

- Break large tasks into small ones, set priorities.
- Try to be with other people, and confide in someone..
- Participate in activities that make you feel better. Moderate exercise, going to a movie, or going to social or religious active activities.
- Take time to eat warm, nutritious meals daily. The brain needs good nutrition as it recovers.
- Expect your mood to improve gradually. Feeling better takes time.
- Postpone important decisions until the depression has lifted.
- As your depression responds to treatment, positive thinking will replace the negative thinking that is a part of depression.
- Let your family and friends help you.