

Sometimes we all seem to have tough days, a feeling of being down or high tension. In some cases, however, stress can accumulate and lead to problems that are difficult to overcome on your own. Here you can read about two common mental diseases, signs and next steps. They help in deciding what to do in your situation or the situation of someone close to you.

What is depression?

Depression (major depressive disorder) is a common and **treatable** mental health disorder. It is characterized by symptoms of feeling sad or worthless, loss of interest, increased fatigue, changes in appetite, sleeping and concentration problems, physical inactivity and / or thoughts of death within the last two weeks.

What is anxiety?

Anxiety can be both, a normal reaction to stress or a part of a common and **treatable** mental disorder. In the last case it can be characterized either by strong fear or worry, high tension, irritability and reactions that interfere with your life in multiple situations for several months (generalized anxiety disorder). Or it can be a recurrent, distinct phase of intense fear, increased heart rate, sweating and tremor (panic disorder).

When is it time to get help?

Take a few minutes and think about the following questions:

- ↘ Do you feel capable to complete all of your daily tasks?
- ↘ Do you feel able to overcome this situation by yourself?
- ↘ Has it improved in the last 10 days?

If you can affirm these questions with a deep conviction, you seem to be on the right track. You can retest yourself within the next ten days. If you have any doubts or feel unable to cope with your current situation, contact a mental health professional. They give advice for reliable ways to improve your well-being, prevent sleepless nights, minimize conflicts with your partner or family, and regain motivation.

Who gives professional help?

- ↘ Your manager can support you at work and your human resources department can refer you to local mental health professionals.
- ↘ Your physician is always the first person in case of health problems. If your doctor excludes medical causes he/she can refer you to a local therapist.
- ↘ You can find a therapist online. Watch out for evidence-based cognitive behavioural therapy e. g. from betterhelp.com or telehealth.org
- ↘ Your health insurance may offer lists of local psychologist directories or has other suggestions
- ↘ **In addition**, you can support your long-term well-being through trainings in stress management, mindfulness based stress reduction, muscle relaxation or autogenic training.