

What is depression?



In the heavy vehicle industry...

Depression affects 11.6% of the Australian population but around 13-21% of heavy vehicles drivers are affected

(Hilton et al. 2009; Rice, 2011; as cited in Chalmers 2016)

Depressed drivers are up to seven times more likely to crash

(Meuleners, 2015; as cited in Chalmers 2016)

Two-thirds of mentally ill people do not get help!

Who can help?

Organisation	Contact number	Website
Your own Employee Assistance Provider		
MensLine Australia – Online Counselling	1300 789 978	www.mensline.org.au
Beyond Blue – Anxiety and Depression	1300 224 636	www.beyondblue.org.au
Lifeline – Crisis support and suicide prevention	13 11 14	www.lifeline.org.au
Black Dog Institute		www.blackdoginstitute.org.au
Man Therapy	1300 222 638	www.mantherapy.org.au
Suicide Call Back – Free counselling	1300 659 467	www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au



Just 'down' or clinically depressed?

The table below shows the symptoms and the signs to look for in depression.

To differentiate between being 'down' and having clinical depression requires a person to have five or more of the symptoms in the table, **including at least one of the first two, for at least two weeks**. Be aware that everyone is different and will present differently.

Symptoms	Signs to look for
Unusually sad or irritable mood that does not go away	Changes in a person's mood, behaviour or energy levels
Loss of enjoyment and interest in activities that used to be enjoyable	
Lack of energy and tiredness	
Feeling worthless or feeling guilty when they are not really at fault	Expressing feelings of worthlessness or guilt
Thinking about death a lot or wishing they were dead	Changes in habits or personality
Difficulty concentrating and making decisions	Indecision, short term memory loss (may ask the same question or repeat themselves)
Moving more slowly or becoming agitated and unable to settle	
Having difficulties sleeping or sleeping too much	
Loss of interest in food or eating too much	

How can I help?

Choose a suitable time to talk, ensuring you have the time available to really listen. Find a place that you are both comfortable in and where you will not be interrupted.

Give the person the opportunity to talk. It can be helpful to let the person choose when to open up. However if they do not initiate conversation about how they are feeling, you should say something to them. Speak openly and honestly about your concerns.

Use 'I' statements such as 'I have noticed....and feel concerned' rather than 'you' statements.

Let the person know you are concerned about them and are willing to help.

Be aware of your body language, including eye contact, posture and physical position in relation to the other person.

Treat the person with respect and dignity by listening non-judgmentally and respecting how the person interprets their symptoms. To make sure you understand what the person is saying reflect back what you hear and if necessary ask questions to clarify.

Be patient, do not interrupt them and allow silences.

Let them know you respect their privacy and confidentiality (unless you suspect them of being suicidal).

Offer support and provide any information they require. This may be information on depression or where they can get help.

If the person doesn't feel comfortable talking to you, encourage them to discuss how they are feeling with someone else. Find out if they have other supports around them; family or friends they can talk to are an important source of support. Support groups for people with depression have been found to be useful in aiding recovery.