

Depression – what you should know



The Department of Psychiatry helps patients cope with psychological problems, behavioural disorders and life's stressors. We assess psychiatric and psychological conditions ranging from depression, bipolar disorder, anxiety disorder, adjustment and stress-related problems, sleep problems, psychosis and geriatric psychiatry. We also work with mental health service providers to provide a comprehensive integrated multi-disciplinary service to patients.

What is depression?

Depression is very common.

It should not be confused with temporary feelings of unhappiness or reactions to life's stressors. Anyone can feel low at times, but someone is suffering from depression when these low feelings persist and affect his or her day-to-day function.

Depression is an illness that is often experienced as episodes. People usually recover from it, but it can also return. Episodes last from a few months to a longer period.





Why do people get depressed

There are a number of reasons why people become depressed. Studies show that genes play an important part. Biochemical abnormalities may also be a factor. The family environment plays an important role in how an individual grows and copes with stressors in life. Major life events could also cause feelings of depression. These could take the form of:

- A relationship breakdown
- Birth of a child
- Death/bereavement
- Divorce
- Losing one's job
- Moving house

For some, depression gets so bad that help is needed.

What does it feel like to be depressed?

People with depression show both emotional and physical symptoms. These include:

- Appetite and weight problems
- Feelings of hopelessness or worthlessness
- Irritability
- Lethargy
- Loss of interest in activities
- Persistent low mood
- Poor concentration
- Problems with sex drive
- Sleep problems
- Thoughts of suicide or inflicting harm on self



What help is available?

There are two types of treatments available. They are talking treatments and medication.

What are talking treatments?

These range from basic counselling to more structured form of psychological therapy like cognitive behavioural therapy. Basic counselling and cognitive behavioural therapy will allow you to talk to an objective and professional person face-to-face. Both services are available at the Ng Teng Fong General Hospital.

What sort of medications might work?

Anti-depressants are effective in treating depression. They help you feel better about yourself and give you the confidence to deal with problems effectively again. It is important to remember that anti-depressants will not lift your moods immediately. Most people notice an improvement only two to three weeks later.

There are different kinds of anti-depressants available in the treatment of depression. Your doctor will advise you.



What will happen if I do not get treatment?

Four out of five people will get better without help, but this could take between four to six months or even longer. This still leaves one in five people depressed after two years. People with severe depression often contemplate ending their lives, so it is advisable to seek treatment early if you suspect you or your loved one are depressed.

Where can I go to get help?

At the Ng Teng Fong General Hospital, we work closely with healthcare providers in the community to provide patients with comprehensive and integrated multi-disciplinary help.

Let us help you regain a new lease of life with a smile on your face. Make an appointment with us today.



For more information

Ng Teng Fong General Hospital and Jurong Community Hospital

1 Jurong East St 21, Singapore 609606

General enquiries: 6716 2000 Fax: 6716 5500

www.juronghealth.com.sg

Clinical and appointment line hours (closed on Sundays and public holidays)

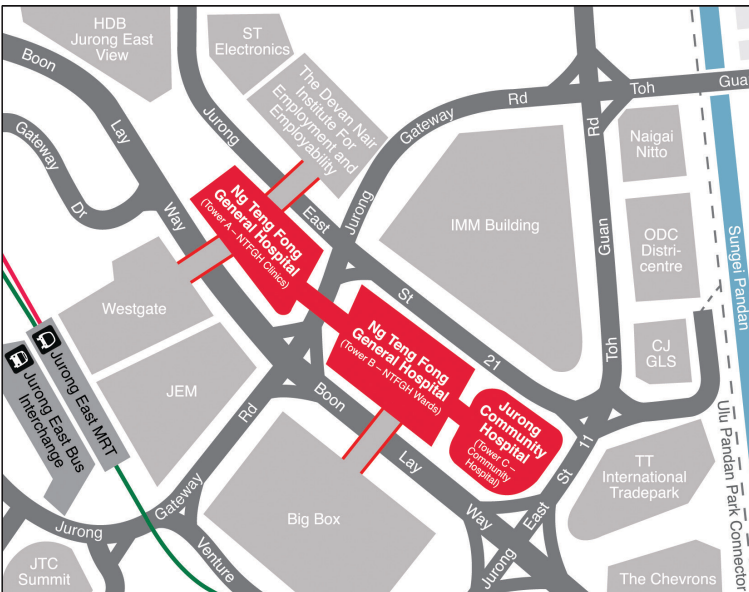
For appointments, please call 6716 2222

Monday - Friday 8.00am - 5.30pm, Saturday 8.00am - 12.30pm

For dental appointments, please call 6716 2233

Monday - Thursday 8.00am - 5.30pm, Friday 8.00am - 5.00pm

Getting there



By train

Jurong East MRT Station

By bus

From Jurong East Bus Interchange

SBS 51, 52, 66, 78, 79, 97, 97e, 98, 98M, 105, 143, 143M,

160, 183, 197, 333, 334, 335, 506

Along Boon Lay Way

SBS 99, Private bus service 625

Disclaimer:

The information in this brochure is meant for educational purposes and should not be used as substitute for medical diagnosis or treatment. Please seek your doctor's advice before starting any treatment or if you have any questions related to your health, physical fitness or medical condition.