



American Heart Association®

Hard Hats with Heart™

# Depression and Your Heart Health

## Depression is reported in 1 in 10 adults in the United States.

Depression and anxiety can cause physiological responses, including increased stress hormones, higher levels of cortisol, higher glucose levels, as well as increased heart rate and blood pressure. This makes taking care of your mental wellbeing as important as taking care of your blood pressure and cholesterol.

### Symptoms can include:



Insomnia or  
lack of energy



No concentration



Anger



Hopelessness



Alcohol or drug  
abuse



Change in eating  
habits



Loss of pleasure or  
interest

## What can you do about it?

- 1.** Identify the cause of your stress or anxiety and address it. Seek therapy if needed.
- 2.** Choose healthy habits and don't rush them. Start off with walking 30 minutes a day or reaching for healthier snacks.
- 3.** Incorporate healthy lifestyle habits one at a time. Don't try to "fix everything at once."
- 4.** Unload your feelings. Talk about them, write them down or join a support group. Depression is a common medical condition, not a character flaw, and you shouldn't be afraid to talk about it.