Depression is one of the most common mental illnesses and can complicate other medical conditions. Red flags for depression include:

- Feeling hopeless, helpless or worthless
- Loss of interest in daily activities
- Anger or irritability
- Fatigue or loss of energy

Try the coping skills listed below to help reduce your depression.

**Behavioral Activation**

Depression depletes your energy to do anything, even activities you enjoy. This lack of activity can cause your depression to worsen. Select activities you are likely to complete, such as:

- Exercise: Go for a walk, a bike ride, practice yoga, or do weightlifting.
- Socialize: Call or text a friend, visit family, join a club or group.
- Personal care: Get a haircut, prepare a healthy meal, shower or take a bath.
- Be consistent in practicing your selected activity. Start small and break up your activities into smaller parts.
- Make a plan and set an alarm as a reminder or bring a friend to make things more fun.

**Social Support**

A common symptom of depression is social isolation. This can be exacerbated by fatigue, anxiety and lowered self-esteem. It is important to lean on social support to improve your resilience to stress and depression.

- Make it a priority to socialize with friends or family every day. Plan virtual interactions if they are not close.
- Say “yes” to social opportunities, even though depression makes it tempting to stay home.
- Join a support group to connect with others who are dealing with issues similar to yours.

**Gratitude**

Negative thinking is a defining feature of depression where positive experiences are minimized and negative experiences are magnified. Gratitude helps shift this tendency toward positive experiences. Write about three positive experiences, big or small, from your day. Repeat this exercise every day for one week.

- Select one of these questions to answer about each of the three positive experiences: Why did this happen? Why was this good thing meaningful? How can I experience more of this good thing?