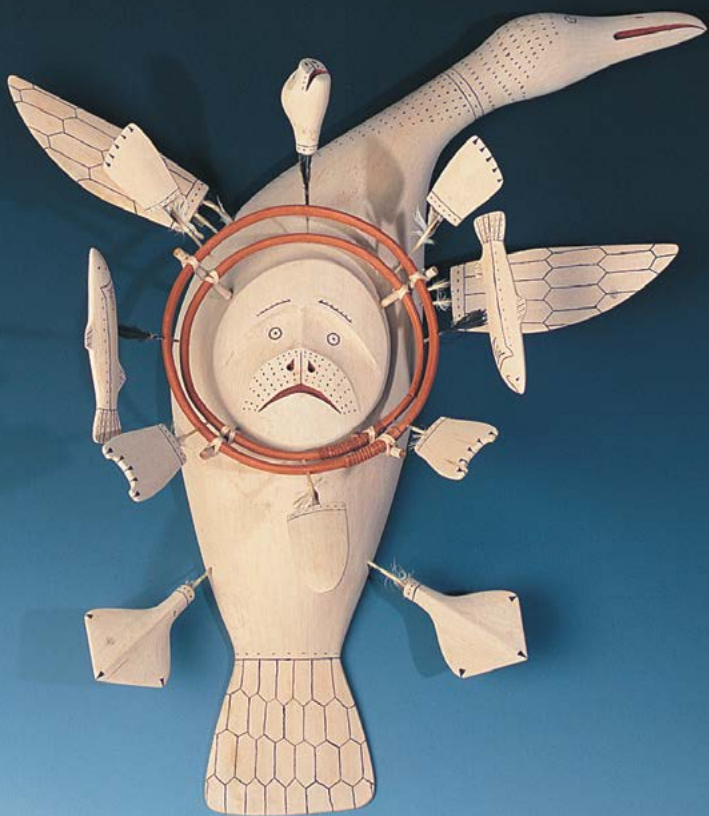


# Depression and Diabetes



ALASKA NATIVE  
TRIBAL HEALTH  
CONSORTIUM

## What is depression?

When a person has diabetes, it is not uncommon to have feelings of frustration, sadness, and being overwhelmed. When feelings of sadness are very strong and last over time, a person may have depression. It is a condition that is commonly missed by providers.

### Does my diabetes put me at risk for depression?

Yes, a person with diabetes is at higher risk for depression. There is more than one reason a person with diabetes could develop depression. Dealing with a chronic disease over time can lead to feelings of depression. Being fearful of complications or managing complications can lead to depression. Feeling alone or set apart from friends and family members can also cause people to develop depression over time.



### What effect can depression have on my diabetes?

Depression can get in the way of a person's ability to practice good diabetes self care. When a person is depressed, they typically don't have much energy. Not having energy can make even small tasks seem difficult to complete. Making healthy choices about food, exercising, checking blood sugar and taking medications can begin to feel impossible. This is one of the reasons it is important to identify and treat depression.



### Symptoms of depression:

- Loss of pleasure in doing things you to enjoy
- Sleep changes – not getting enough sleep, or wanting to sleep more than usual
- Changes in appetite – no appetite or eating more than usual
- Loss of energy
- Suicidal thoughts
- Feelings of guilt
- Morning sadness – waking up feeling sad

If you have 3 or more of these symptoms, or one or two but have been feeling bad for two weeks or more, it is important to get help.

## Getting Help

Talk to your provider about your feelings of depression. Some medications can cause depression. Also, thyroid issues can cause problems. Your provider will want to look into physical causes for depression.

If your provider has ruled out other causes for your depression, then there are different options for help. Counseling and medication are two treatment options for depression. Talk to your provider about what options are available to you.

*Much of the information for this educational piece was excerpted from the American Diabetes Association webpage on depression. For more information, visit, <http://www.diabetes.org/living-with-diabetes/complications/mental-health/depression.html>.*

## More Information

For more information or if you have questions, contact:

**Diabetes Educator:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_



## Diabetes Program

ALASKA NATIVE TRIBAL HEALTH CONSORTIUM

**[www.anthc.org/diabetes](http://www.anthc.org/diabetes)**  
**(907) 729-1125**