



Loss and change can cause some people to become depressed. If you find that things are getting too hard, make sure to talk to someone you trust.

Remember you are not alone! There are many teens who are going through the same thing as you are and have the same feelings as you do.

How to contact us

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About Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital

Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital is Canada's largest children's rehabilitation hospital.

Our vision is to create a world of possibility for kids with disability. We pioneer treatments, technologies, therapies and real-world programs that give children with disabilities the tools to participate fully in life.

Holland Bloorview serves about 7,000 children each year, with about 600 inpatient admissions and 58,000 outpatient visits. Holland Bloorview is a world-class teaching hospital fully affiliated with the University of Toronto. We train future health-care specialists in the field of childhood disability. The Bloorview Research Institute is located onsite, allowing us to integrate cutting-edge research and teaching with frontline care to improve children's quality of life.



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Teens Coping with Loss and Change After Brain Injury

The help you need

A guide for recovering from a neurological illness or injury

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Brain injury often brings about many life changes. Feeling sad, hopeless, frustrated and worried about the future is normal and can last awhile. Many teens living with a brain injury want to feel better, but don't know where to turn for help or what to do.

Common losses or changes

- Feeling different
- Can't do things I used to enjoy (e.g. sports)
- No social life
- School is harder
- Loss of independence
- Loss of freedom
- Can't drive or work
- Less confidence
- Can't go out by myself or be left alone
- Feeling lonely
- Friends no longer call

Comments often heard:

"I want my old life back."

"Why bother? Nothing works."

"I can't do anything right."

"People are going to think I'm a loser."

"I don't need anyone's help, I can figure it out myself."

Which of the following have you noticed?

- Feeling down, blue, or hopeless
- Crying spells
- Feeling edgy or restless
- Feeling guilty or worthless
- Getting frustrated easily
- Trouble falling or staying asleep or sleeping too much
- Low energy
- Eating too much or not enough
- Worrying a lot
- Trouble making decisions, concentrating or remembering things
- Not enjoying things like before
- Avoiding people
- Wondering whether or not life is worth living

Scoring: The more items you check, the more you might be depressed—make sure to talk to an adult you trust.

How can you help yourself?

Don't:

- Do it all alone, get some help.
- Keep your feelings bottled up inside.
- Blame yourself or beat yourself up for what happened.
- Think negative thoughts about yourself.
- Focus on things that are out of your control.
- Spend too much time by yourself.
- Focus on the things you can't do or can't change.

Do:

- Talk about what you're going through with someone you trust.
- Do more fun things.
- Think of the good things that are going on in your life.
- Focus on what you're good at and what you **can** do.
- Focus on positive thoughts about yourself.
- Do things that you enjoy or that you're good at.
- Make a list of things that you like about yourself, look at the list often.
- Find ways to make new friends—join a club, take part in activities.
- Join a support group. Talk to other teens to find out how they are dealing with their brain injury.