Depression

You have signs of depression. This is a common problem which occurs at any age. Depression is common. It is often hard to recognize. People can be suffering from depression and still have moments of enjoyment.

Symptoms of depression may include:

- Feeling unhappy or worthless.
- Chronic tiredness or worn out feeling.
- Self-destructive thoughts and actions.
- Inability to sleep or sleeping too much.
- Eating more than usual or not eating at all.
- Headaches or feeling anxious.
- Difficulties concentrating or making decisions.
- Unexplained physical complaints and substance abuse.

Depression interferes with your basic ability to function in life. It upsets your relationships as well as your sleep, eating, and work habits.

Depression is believed to be caused by an imbalance in brain chemicals. It may be triggered by an unpleasant event. It may also start without any apparent reason. Relationship crises, a death in the family, financial worries, retiring, or other stressors are normal causes of depression. This is not necessarily abnormal.

Other factors that may play a part:

- Medical illnesses.
- Some medicines
- Genetics
- Alcohol or drug abuse

Depression usually gets better with treatment. **This can include:**

- **A**nti-depressant medications. It can take weeks before the proper dose and benefit are reached.
- Talking with a therapist, minister, counselor, or a friend. These people can help you gain insight into your problem and regain control of your life.
- Eating a good diet.
- Getting regular physical exercise (such as walking for 30 minutes every day).
- Not abusing alcohol or drugs.

Treating depression often takes 6 months or longer. Treatment should be this long to keep the symptoms from returning. **Be sure to call your caregiver and arrange for follow-up care as suggested.**

Document Released: 12/18/2006 Document Re-Released: 09/26/2009

ExitCare® Patient Information ©2011 ExitCare, LLC.