

# Clear and Easy #3



**Molina Healthcare**  
**24 Hour Nurse Advice Line**  
(888) 275-8750  
TTY: (866) 735-2929

**Molina Healthcare**  
**Línea de TeleSalud**  
**Disponible las 24 Horas**  
(866) 648-3537  
TTY: (866) 833-4703

# **Titles by Clear and Easy**

Book 1 – Pregnancy

Book 2 – Diabetes

Book 3 – Stress and Depression

Book 4 – End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD)

Book 5 – Asthma

Book 6 – Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary  
Disease (COPD)

Book 7 – Congestive Heart Failure

Book 8 – Hypertension

Book 9 – Coronary Heart Disease

Book 10 – How to Take Care of Your Sick  
Family

Book 11 – Help to Quit Smoking

Book 12 – Kids and Asthma

Book 13 – Kids and Diabetes

Book 14 – How to Keep Your Family Healthy

Book 15 – Asthma and COPD

Book 16 – Hypertension and Coronary Heart  
Disease

Book 17 – Postpartum: Caring for You and  
Your Newborn

Do you have health questions? Call Molina Healthcare's Nurse Advice Line. Places to put our number:

- On all your home phones.
- Your cell phone. Add us to your list of contacts.
- Your purse or wallet.
- Refrigerator door.
- Bedroom nightstand.
- In your medicine cabinet.
- In easy to reach places.



### **NM SCI Members:**

You may also call UNM SCI Nurse Advice at (877) 725-2552. Molina Healthcare services are funded in part under contract with the State of New Mexico.

# Clear and Easy

## Book 3 - Stress and Depression

### Important Phone Numbers

Provider: \_\_\_\_\_

Provider: \_\_\_\_\_

Family: \_\_\_\_\_

Neighbor: \_\_\_\_\_

Molina Healthcare offers programs to help members stay healthy. These health and wellness programs are at no cost to you. They are part of your benefits. Programs include:

- Asthma
- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)
- Diabetes
- Heart Health
- Pregnancy Support
- Stop Smoking

Molina Healthcare uses different ways to identify members for these programs. These include information from claims, pharmacy or other health programs. You are eligible for one or more of these programs. The choice is yours.

Our providers, nurses and other staff are here to help you learn about your health. You can talk with them by phone to get answers to your questions. You can also get more information such as a newsletter or booklet. Our staff can help you stay in touch with your health care provider. They can help you understand your treatment. They can also help you if you have any problems.

You are part of one of these programs. Call us if you would like more services. Your health care provider can call us too. The number to call is **(866) 891-2320**. You can choose to be removed at any time. We look forward to helping you stay in good health.

***If you need this booklet in another language, large print, Braille or audio format, please call the Member Services number on the back of your ID card.***



# Table of Contents

## Clear and Easy

### Book 3 - Stress and Depression

Introduction.....	6
Stress .....	8
How Stress Affects Thoughts and Emotions.....	9
How Stress Affects the Body .....	11
What You Can Do to Relieve Stress.....	12
Depression.....	14
Types of Depression.....	15
Signs and Symptoms of Depression.....	16
Mental Health and Illness.....	18
Depression Self-Screen.....	20
Treatments .....	23
How to Feel Better .....	25
Support.....	27
Resources.....	30



## **Introduction**

You and your provider can work together to help you be as healthy as you can be. This booklet gives you some quick tips on what you can do to manage stress and depression. You should not use this booklet in place of what your health care provider tells you. If you have problems with your health, be sure to see your provider (or Primary Care Provider) for treatment.

For questions about medicine or health concerns, you can call your provider.

If your health plan has a nurse advice line, you can call them too. If you don't feel well, they can help you decide what to do.

You may have someone who helps you with your health care. You must give permission to your provider or case managers to talk to this person about your care.



*This booklet is to help you. It does not take the place of your provider's care. If you or your family has an emergency, you should call your provider. Or, go to the nearest emergency room.*

## Stress

**Stress** is the body's response to any situation that seems demanding or dangerous. Your stress level depends on three things:

1. How intense the stress is.
2. How long it lasts.
3. How you cope with the situation.

Most of the time, stress doesn't last long. Your body can recover quickly from stress. If stress gets really bad and you need help, call your provider.

But stress can cause problems if it happens too often.



It can also cause physical problems if your body doesn't have a chance to recover. This includes headache, muscle pain, even rapid heartbeat.

**Chronic stress** is stress that lasts over a long period of time. This could include things like having a difficult job. It also includes dealing with a chronic disease. If you already have a health problem, stress can make it worse.

## **How Stress Affects Thoughts and Emotions**

You might notice signs of stress in the way you think, act and feel. You may:

- Feel cranky and unable to deal with even small problems.
- Feel frustrated, lose your temper more often and yell at others for no reason.
- Feel jumpy or tired all the time.

- Find it hard to focus on tasks.
- Worry too much about small things.
- Feel that you are missing out on things because you can't act quickly.
- Imagine that bad things are happening or about to happen.

How stress affects you depends on many things, such as:

- Your personality.
- What you have learned from your family about responding to stress.
- How you think about and handle stress.
- How you cope.
- Your social support.

## How Stress Affects the Body

Common symptoms of stress include:

- A fast heartbeat.
- A headache.
- A stiff neck or tight shoulders.
- Back pain.
- Fast breathing.
- Sweating and sweaty palms.
- An upset stomach, nausea or diarrhea.

Over time, stress can affect different parts of your body.

- ***Immune system.*** You are more likely to get sick often.
- ***Heart.*** Stress is linked to high blood pressure and other heart problems.

- ***Muscles.*** Tension from stress can lead to neck, shoulder and low back pain.
- ***Stomach.*** If you have stomach problems, stress can make your symptoms worse.
- ***Lungs.*** Stress can make symptoms of asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) worse.
- ***Skin.*** Problems such as acne and psoriasis are made worse by stress.

## **What You Can Do to Relieve Stress**

### **Exercise**

Our bodies were designed to exercise. Exercise can help your body work better.

One of the best things to do for stress is to start exercising. It's best to do 30-60 minutes of exercise a day. Do this most days of the week. But check with your provider first to make sure it's OK.



## Quick Exercises to Decrease Stress

1. **Walk in small doses.** Get out of your chair and get your legs moving for a few minutes. The quicker you walk, the better.



- 2. Make your lunch break count.** If you have a half-hour lunch, spend 20 minutes of it walking. You'll feel a lot better in the afternoon after you exercise.
- 3. March!** Do high marches to really get your blood going.
- 4. Chair squats.** Chair squats are a quick and easy way to release some energy.

## **Depression**

Everyone has bad or sad days, but it usually doesn't last very long. Someone who is depressed has more severe symptoms. It's hard to live life normally.

Some signs of depression are:

- No enjoyment in life.
- Trouble sleeping.
- Trouble concentrating.
- Change in eating habits.
- Low energy.

Depression can be serious. Many people who are depressed can get better with treatment. There are many ways to deal with depression.

## Types of Depression

There are many types of depression. Some are more common than others.

- **Major depressive disorder.** When this happens, it's hard to work, study, eat and sleep normally. People don't enjoy life as usual. It's hard to function.

- **Postpartum depression.** This occurs when a new mother gets depressed any time after having a baby.
- **Seasonal affective disorder (SAD).** This usually happens during the winter months. It happens more often when there is less natural sunlight. It usually gets better during spring and summer.

## **Signs and Symptoms of Depression**

People don't all have the same symptoms. How bad the symptoms are can vary. So can how long they last.

People with depression may feel:

- Sad, anxious or “empty”.
- Hopeless.
- Guilty or worthless.
- Irritable, restless.
- Loss of interest in activities or hobbies that they like.
- Fatigue and decreased energy.
- Difficulty concentrating.
- Trouble sleeping.
- Eating too much or too little.
- Thoughts of suicide, suicide attempts.
- Aches and pains that don't get better with treatment.

## **Mental Health and Illness**

Sometimes people dealing with illness get depressed. Sometimes it's hard to adjust, or they are stressed. Having other illnesses can be difficult. This includes heart disease, diabetes, cancer and other diseases. People who take care of others can also get depressed. It's different for every person.

It can be hard to keep up with a treatment plan. Some people don't understand what they need to do. Family members may disagree with a treatment plan. There can be financial problems. Sometimes people can have problems with anxiety, even panic attacks. Alcohol and other substance abuse can occur with depression.

Treating the depression can make the illness better.

It's OK to ask for help if you are having any of these problems.



Your treatment team can help you. Talk to your provider or case manager.

## Depression Self-Screen

<b>In the past two weeks, how often have you been bothered by these problems? (Circle your answer).</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>About 3-7 days</b>	<b>More than 8 days</b>	<b>Nearly every day</b>
1. Little interest or pleasure in doing things.	0	1	2	3
2. Feeling down, depressed, or hopeless.	0	1	2	3
3. Trouble falling or staying asleep, or sleeping too much.	0	1	2	3
4. Feeling tired or having little energy.	0	1	2	3

<b>In the past two weeks, how often have you been bothered by these problems? (Circle your answer).</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>About 3-7 days</b>	<b>More than 8 days</b>	<b>Nearly every day</b>
5. Poor appetite or overeating.	0	1	2	3
6. Feeling bad about yourself. Feeling you are a failure or let your family down.	0	1	2	3
7. Trouble concentrating on things like reading or watching TV.	0	1	2	3



8. Moving or speaking so slowly that people notice. Or being so restless that you move more than usual.	0	1	2	3
9. Thoughts that you might hurt yourself or would be better off dead.	0	1	2	3
Add up question 1-9. Do this for each column. Write the totals here:				

Now add together all the totals on the bottom row.

Write your Final Total here: \_\_\_\_\_

If your Final Total score is more than 5, it could help you to talk with a health care provider. Call your provider, a nurse or your case manager. Share the results of this test with him or her. He or she will talk with you more to help you decide what you can do next.

## Treatments

Depression can be treated. The earlier treatment starts, the more effective it is. Call your provider first. Sometimes a physical problem causes the same symptoms as depression.



Your provider will give you a checkup. He or she will also talk with you and recommend treatment. Treatment can include psychotherapy. This is also called “talk therapy”.

Your provider may recommend medication. Medication for depression works in different ways. If you are taking medication, be sure to take it exactly as your provider says. Sometimes it takes a few weeks before you notice a difference. With some medications, there are certain foods you should avoid. Be sure to talk to your provider about this.

Keep taking your medication, even if you are feeling better. Do not stop it unless you talk to your provider. Some medicines need to be stopped slowly. This is to give your body time to adjust.

## How to Feel Better

When you are depressed it can be hard to help yourself. You may feel exhausted, helpless and hopeless. But this will start to get better. These things will help:

- Get out and get active. Go to a movie or a ballgame. Do things you once enjoyed.
- Set realistic goals for yourself.
- Break up large tasks into small ones. Set some small goals and do what you can.
- Try to spend time with other people. Try not to isolate yourself. Let others help you.
- Do not expect to suddenly “snap out of” your depression. Things will get better gradually.

- Don't make any important decisions right now.
- Remember that positive thinking will replace negative thoughts as your depression responds to treatment.

## **Are You in Crisis?**

If you are thinking about harming yourself, tell someone who can help right away.

- Call your provider.
- Call 911 or go to a hospital emergency room. You will get immediate help. You can ask a friend or family member to call for you.
- Call the toll-free, 24-hour hotline of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. You will be connected to a trained person who can help.

- » Phone: (800) 273-8255
- » TTY: (800) 799-4889
- Make sure you or the suicidal person is not left alone.

## Support

Many people have stress because of other health issues. These can include:

- High blood pressure.
- High cholesterol.
- Heart disease.
- Diabetes.
- Osteoporosis.
- Depression.
- Cancer.

Coping with these issues can be hard. You might feel fear or anxiety. You might be stressed or become depressed. Talk with your provider. It's OK to ask for help. Tell your family and friends how you feel. Let them know how they can help you.



Joining a support group can help too. This booklet gives names of places where you can get help.

## How Can Family or Friends Help?

You may have someone who helps you with your health care. They can:

- Help remind you to take your medicines.
- Help you buy and prepare healthy foods.
- Take a walk with you.
- Go to provider visits with you.

Sometimes it helps when someone else hears what your health care provider says. You must give permission to your providers and case managers to talk to this person about your care.



## Resources

### **National Institute of Mental Health**

Science Writing, Press & Dissemination Branch

(866) 615-6464

TTY (866) 415-8051

<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/depression/index.shtml>

### **Mental Health America**

(800) 969-6642

Stress: <http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/go/stress>

Depression: <http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/go/depression>

### **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline**

(800) 273-8255

<http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org>











**Printed in the U.S.A.**

27481DM0912