

WHERE TO GET HELP

- NDSU Extension – Farm/Ranch Stress Resources:
www.ag.ndsu.edu/farmranchstress
- Together Counseling LLC – Offers in-person and telehealth farm-to-farm counseling services; counselors have farming backgrounds. Cost coverage available as needed.
Call: **(701) 404-0997**
<https://www.togethercounselinggroup.com/farm-to-farm>
- ND Regional Human Service Centers – Counseling services available statewide:
<https://www.nd.gov/dhs/locations/regionalhsc/>
- FirstLink Help Line (24-hour helpline, services, referral) –
Call: **2-1-1** <https://myfirstlink.org>
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (available 24 hours/day) – Call: **(800) 273-8255**
- In an emergency, call **9-1-1**

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YOU DON'T HAVE TO GO IT ALONE.



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WEARING OUT YOUR BOOTSTRAPS?

HELP IS AVAILABLE.



IN NORTH DAKOTA, WE EXPECT A LOT FROM OUR BOOTSTRAPS.

Handling stresses. Fixing problems. Farmers and ranchers learn early how to take care of our own challenges.

But life stresses can overwhelm us. That doesn't mean we are weak—it means we are human. Life can get tough at times.

Being frustrated, down, or exhausted doesn't mean you are failing. Such feelings are stress signals, like the "check engine" light on a vehicle. They mean slow down and focus on wellness—**your health is your most important asset in farming and ranching.**



SADNESS VS. DEPRESSION

Feeling down, sad or discouraged? Such feelings are normal, especially in times of loss or stress. Depression is different. Depression is a medical condition, like arthritis, and does not just improve on its own.

Common Signs of Depression:

- Depressed, sad mood
- Irritability (more common in men)
- Constant worry, restless thoughts
- Inability to concentrate, make decisions
- Loss of interest in activities
- Wanting to be alone, avoid others
- Sleep issues (insomnia or too much sleeping)
- Feeling tired, lack of energy
- Physical stresses (upset stomach, trouble eating, headaches, muscle aches)
- Feelings of being worthless, hopeless
- Repeated thoughts of death, suicide
- Others asking if you are okay, if something is wrong

If you notice any of these symptoms, you could be experiencing depression. Please seek medical care.

YOU ARE NOT ALONE

- **Depression is not a sign of weakness.** We may not like asking for help or wonder what others might think. Depression requires help. Asking others for help indicates wisdom and strength.
- **You are not alone.** Millions have experienced mild to severe depression—and gotten help.
- **Untreated depression damages health and limits quality of life.** It risks a person's life. North Dakota showed a 57% increase in suicide rates over a recent 20-year period—the highest in the nation.
- **Depression is a complex medical condition.** It requires treatment and support. It is not better to hide it, ignore it, or struggle with it alone. Seek help from people you trust including your health care professional.

I AM WORRIED ABOUT SOMEONE. WHAT CAN I DO?

- **Simply ask if they are OK.** When a person is depressed, they may not realize it. Be prepared to share, in a non-judgmental and non-shaming way, **what** you have noticed and **why** you are concerned.
- **Let the person know you care sincerely about them.**
- **Use these three steps:** (1) Listen; (2) Respond; (3) Refer. Listen to the person's feelings and fears; do not minimize problems or give out advice. Respond with any concerns or questions, and communicate your care. Refer to a health care provider or mental health resource, and go together if possible.
- **Ask if they have considered harming themselves or attempting suicide.** Bringing up the topic reduces risk (does NOT increase it), lessens stigma about such feelings, and invites the person to open up.

TUNE-UPS AND TOOLS FOR DEPRESSION

To manage stress or depression, a variety of tools can help:

- Schedule a visit right away with your primary health care provider. Get a full exam.
- Check out mental health tips and screening tools at Mental Health America: www.mhanational.org
- Practice wellness—exercise; healthy diet; good sleep habits; laughter; connecting with loved ones; stress reduction efforts; and seeking help.