DEPRESSION

Almost everyone feels sad or "depressed" at certain times, but clinical depression is stronger and lasts longer.

People with depression experience a number of symptoms including sadness, loss of interest in activities they usually enjoy, changes in appetite, sleep problems, reduced interest in sexual activity, difficulties with concentration or memory, loss of energy, feelings of worthlessness, and thoughts or plans related to suicide. Depression is common is people with heart problems; about 1 in 5 patients experiences clinical depression.

How does depression affect my heart?

Depression has specific physical effects that put your heart at risk:

- It increases the risk of blood clotting and causes problems with the inner lining of your blood vessels.
- It leads to the build-up of plaque and to the development of atherosclerosis

Depression also has general effects that cause additional risk to your heart. It wakens your immune system and, like stress, it also influences some of the decisions you make around exercise, healthy eating, or taking medications safely.

What should I do if I am feeling depressed?

- ▫ Seek support from your family and friends or from support groups
- ▫ Share your fears and worries with someone you trust
- ▫ Determine how much control you have in a given situation and let go of things that are beyond your control
- ▫ Plan to do things that you enjoy and then do them
- ▫ Take time for yourself
- ▫ Participate in a cardiac rehabilitation program
- ▫ Set goals to become physically active, then take action, because physical activity promotes relaxation and the release of endorphins (anti-stress hormones)
- ▫ Celebrate your achievements
- ▫ Recognize when you need extra help and talk to your doctor or a mental health professional (social worker, psychologist or psychiatrist)

What are the first steps you are willing to take in the next few days? _____

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_____

Rate your confidence – How much do you believe you can do this? Circle your answer

Not at all										**Extremely confident**
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10