Some things to **keep in mind when getting help for depression:**

- Take an active role
- Ask questions
- Keep your appointments
- Ask your doctors to work together and sign a Release of Information Form
- Track your symptoms so you can talk about them with your doctor
- Be sure to take your medication as directed and do not stop taking medication without talking to your doctor first

If taking medication to treat depression, **talk to your doctor about:**

- Side effects you may be having
- Any problems taking the medicine
- How long to stay on your medicine
- How often to refill the medicine

National Resources

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (formerly National Suicide Prevention Lifeline)

Call 9-8-8

Optum Member Website

www.liveandworkwell.com

Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance

www.dbsalliance.org

Call 988 or text DBSA to 741-741

The National Alliance on Mental Illness

www.nami.org

800-950-6264

Mental Health America (former National Mental Health Association)

https://mhanational.org/

800-969-6642

The National Institute of Mental Health

www.nimh.nih.gov

866-615-6464

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) National Helpline

www.samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline

1-800-662-HELP (4357)

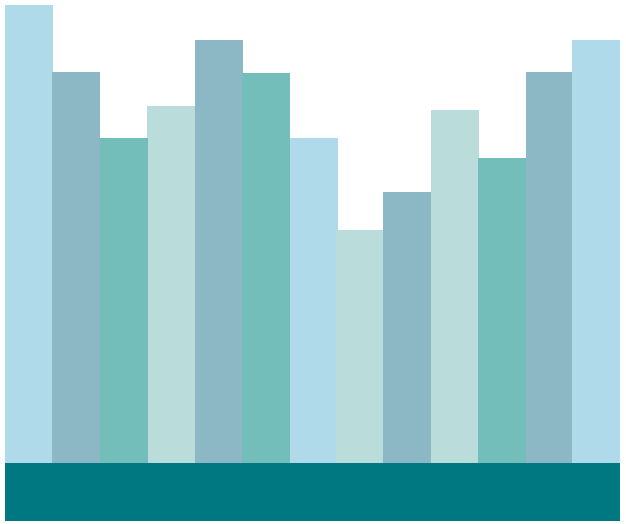
TTY: 1-800-487-4889

(02/2026)

VENTURA COUNTY

HEALTH CARE AGENCY

Why Should I See a Behavioral Health Clinician?



Your first step to Recovery.

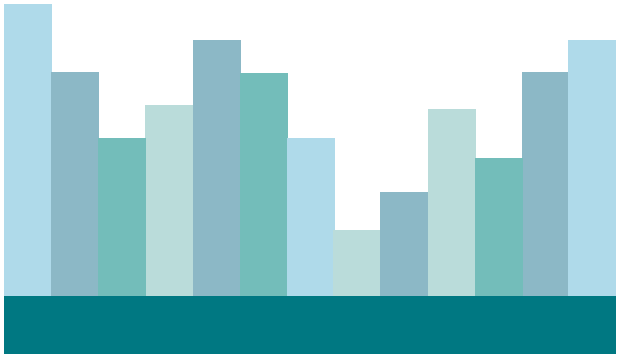
Congratulations! Talking to your family doctor or nurse is a great first step towards getting help with depression and behavioral health issues (substance use and/or mental health).

Your doctor or nurse can give you information and advice, and can prescribe medicine.

Sometimes your doctor will want to refer you to a behavioral health clinician.

Behavioral health clinicians are experts with special training and proper licensing in depression, mental health or substance use treatment. Some get special training to work with children, teens, families or seniors.

If you had heart disease you would see a heart specialist. Your brain, is like your heart, and also needs special care.



There are **advantages to seeing a behavioral health clinician for depression.**

Some people find it helpful to start treatment with a Master's level clinician, such as a therapist or social worker. A Master's level clinician can provide talk therapy and can conduct an assessment to help you get the right kind of treatment. They can help you decide if additional referrals are needed, such as for medications.

Seeing a behavioral health clinician can be a very effective way to treat and even overcome a number of behavioral health issues.

With support from a trained clinician, you can:

- Successfully work through life problems
- Gain new perspectives on your problems
- Identify coping skills
- Regain a sense of control

Talk therapy is an essential tool in achieving recovery from depression. If you are taking a medication for depression, it may increase the Success of your treatment.

How to **get more help.**

VCHCP has a network of contracted clinicians and facilities that treat depression and behavioral health issues. VCHCP contracts with OptumHealth Behavioral Solutions (Life Strategies) for Mental/ Behavioral health services.

You can access this network by calling (800) 851-7407. This number is also listed on the back of your insurance card.

When you call you can expect

- Help in finding the right type of clinician for your needs
- A private conversation about your treatment options
- Help finding an appointment

To find out more

- Visit **liveandworkwell.com** and register with your information found on your insurance card
- Liveandworkwell.com offers great information for people of all ages and personal challenges
- Additional national resources are listed on the back of this flyer.

Congratulations on taking the first step in your recovery!