

Depression

What Is Depression?

Depression is a state of low mood and lethargy that can affect your behaviour, feelings, thoughts and wellbeing. It can be a normal reaction to a life event such as bereavement, birth, losing your job, pain or being diagnosed with an illness. It can also be a symptom of some illnesses or a side effect of some drugs and medical treatments.

How Can It Affect Me?

If you are depressed you can feel sad, anxious, upset, empty, hopeless, helpless, worthless, guilty, irritable, angry, ashamed and restless. You may lose interest in activities that were once pleasurable, experience loss of appetite or overeating, have problems concentrating, remembering details or making decisions, experience relationship difficulties. In some cases people may contemplate, attempt or commit suicide. Depression can also cause sleep problems, fatigue, aches, pains, digestive problems or reduced energy.

How Can I Help Myself?

Writing a journal can help you to get your feelings out.

Reduce your alcohol intake and eat healthily, as alcohol is a depressant.

Exercise regularly as this helps with sleep disturbance and helps you maintain a routine.

Meditation can be useful to control and challenge your thought patterns if they get stuck or wander on their own, helping you to concentrate.

Talking things through with a friend or a counsellor can help you to work through what has happened and support you through difficult times.

What Do I Do If It Gets Too Much?

If you are finding it difficult to help yourself, your depression is not going away or you are experiencing thoughts about suicide you should make an appointment to see your GP. They can talk through options with you including medication, counselling, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy or a combination of these therapies, all of which can be very effective.

If you choose to use a private counsellor make sure they are BACP or NCS registered. The British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy and the National Counselling Society hold the voluntary registers for counsellors and psychotherapists so you know that anyone registered with them has the appropriate training and qualifications to treat you.

Make an appointment today

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