

Dealing with depression



Taking crucial steps

If you are depressed, it sometimes feels that nothing can help. But this is not true: deciding to do something about it is the most crucial step you can take. Most people recover from bouts of depression, and others learn to manage the symptoms if it happens again.

What is depression?

Depression is more than simply feeling unhappy or fed up for a few days, when you are medically depressed, you may feel sad for weeks or months. Depression is an illness, not a sign of weakness or something you can 'snap out of' by 'pulling yourself together.'

Depression can come on gradually and so you may not have noticed the changes it can take a friend or family member to suggest that something is wrong.

Doctors describe depression by how serious the effects are:

1. Mild depression has some impact on your daily life. By getting help, it is possible to overcome depression, and prevent it coming back
2. Moderate depression has a significant impact on your daily life
3. Severe depression makes it almost impossible to get through daily life

If you experience 5 or more of the symptoms listed below for more than two weeks, the chances are you are experiencing depression and should seek help.



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Psychological symptoms

- Continuous low mood or sadness
- Feeling numb, empty, and helpless
- Taking a bleak view of the future or having lots of negative thoughts
- Lacking self-confidence and self-esteem
- Feeling tearful; crying a lot
- No motivation or interest in things
- Difficulty in concentrating and making decisions.
- Suicidal thoughts or thoughts of harming yourself
- Anxious or worried, restless, and agitated

Physical symptoms

- Moving or speaking more slowly than usual
- Changes in appetite or weight
- Physical aches and pains for no apparent reason
- Tired and lacking energy
- Losing interest in sex
- Disturbed sleep
- Self-harming (by cutting yourself, for example)

Social symptoms

- Not doing well at work
- Taking part in fewer social activities and avoiding contact with your friends
- Distancing yourself from others; not asking for support
- Neglecting hobbies and interests
- Having difficulties in your home and family life
- Using more tobacco, alcohol, or other drugs than usual

Who is affected by depression?

Depression is quite common and affects people, both young and old. Depression can sometimes be triggered by life events including bereavement, job loss, relationship issues. There may be a family history of depression, or you can become depressed for no obvious reason.



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Do I have depression?

We often say, 'I'm feeling depressed' when we are feeling a bit sad or miserable about life, but these feelings should pass after a brief time. If the feelings are interfering with your life and do not go away after a couple of weeks, it could be that you are depressed.

How serious is depression?

At its mildest, you may simply feel low most of the time, at its most severe, depression can be life-threatening, making you feel suicidal. Either way there is support out there for you and do not be afraid to take it.

What should I do to get help?

If you think you may be depressed, please contact your GP, speak to friends' family anyone you trust.

Licensed Trade Charity

Licensed Trade Charity have a 24/7 helpline with confidential, independent trained counsellors that are ready to listen and support you. You may find it hard to imagine that anything can help but the sooner you speak to someone the sooner your feelings of depression can be alleviated.

Telephone: 0808 801 0550

NHS

The NHS has a short online test which could help you find out if you are depressed or have anxiety.

www.nhs.uk/mental-health/self-help/guides-tools-and-activities/depression-anxiety-self-assessment-quiz

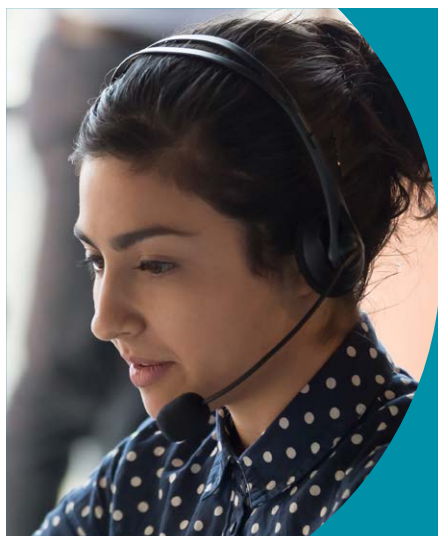
Mind

Mind Infoline: 0300 123 3393 or text 86463

www.mind.org.uk – this website has a very helpful list of sources of help and further reading.

Telephone: 020 8 519 2122

Email: contact@mind.org.uk



The Licensed Trade Charity are available 24/7, if you'd like to talk about your situation, we can help you. Contact us for confidential, free of charge support. If you are experiencing any of the issues covered in this fact sheet, in the first instance call our helpline on:

0808 801 0550

Our Helpline Team will listen without judging and will work with you as best they can to achieve a positive outcome. If you prefer, you can email: enquiries@ltcharity.org.uk or visit our website at www.licensedtradecharity.org.uk, it's full of useful information about the kind of issues we know people who work in the licensed trade face.



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Note: This guide is not exhaustive. It has been produced by the Licensed Trade Charity to provide you with an overview of the issue in question. We are grateful to all specialist organisations who support our charity and are available to you should you be experiencing this particular issue.
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