

FACT SHEET

Depression

Depression is more than feeling sad for a day or two. It can affect mood, thinking, motivation, sleep, appetite, relationships, and the ability to do even simple everyday tasks.



clear, practical, supportive

WHAT IT CAN LOOK LIKE

- Persistent sadness, emptiness, numbness, or hopelessness
- Loss of interest or pleasure in things that usually matter
- Low energy, slowed thinking, or difficulty getting started
- Changes in sleep, appetite, concentration, or self-care
- Harsh self-talk, guilt, or feeling like a burden

WHAT CAN CONTRIBUTE

- Stressful life events, ongoing pressure, or isolation
- Biological vulnerability, hormones, health issues, or family history
- Long periods of low activity, low connection, or poor sleep
- Grief, trauma, or chronic pain
- Feeling trapped, unsupported, or unable to see a way forward

Why it matters

- Depression can shrink your world, making everything feel heavier and less meaningful.
- The less you do, the less rewarding life can feel, which often keeps the cycle going.
- It often affects motivation first, not character or effort.
- Support works best when it combines compassion with small practical steps.

Helpful reminders

- Depression can tell convincing lies about your worth and your future.
- Waiting to feel motivated before acting can keep you stuck.
- Small repeated actions often matter more than big bursts of effort.

PRACTICAL STRATEGIES

Choose the ideas that feel realistic for you. Small consistent changes usually work better than trying to change everything at once.

- Lower the starting point. Break tasks into very small steps so action feels possible, not overwhelming.
- Use behavioural activation. Keep at least a few activities in your week that support pleasure, mastery, or connection.
- Stay connected even when isolation feels tempting. Depression often grows in silence.
- Reduce harsh self-talk. Speak to yourself as you would to someone you care about who is struggling.
- Support your body. Sleep rhythm, meals, sunlight, movement, and hydration all help create a steadier base.
- Notice your negative thinking patterns without automatically believing them.
- Tell someone if your mood is dropping or if you feel less safe than usual.
- See a GP or mental health professional when symptoms are persistent, worsening, or affecting safety or functioning.
- Track what makes the problem better or worse. A short note in your phone or diary can reveal patterns you can actually use.
- Aim for steady progress, not perfection. Review what helped this week and keep the plan realistic enough to repeat.


TRY THIS TODAY

Start with one small, achievable step.

- Choose one tiny task, one person to message, and one activity that usually helps you feel a little more human.
- Use a simple rule: action first, motivation second.
- If you are feeling unsafe, reach out for immediate support now rather than waiting.

WHEN TO GET EXTRA SUPPORT

- Low mood or numbness is persisting or worsening.
- You are withdrawing, struggling to function, or losing hope.
- You are having thoughts of self-harm, suicide, or not wanting to continue.
- You need support to start treatment or put safety around you.