

# Depression

*information leaflet*

**Depression** is more than feeling unhappy or fed up for a few days. When you're depressed you feel persistently sad for a few weeks or months. In its mildest form it does not stop us from leading a normal life, but the most severe depression can affect the completion of everyday tasks. Many people will suffer from depression at some point in their life. Depression is indiscriminate, no one is exempt from it.



## Common symptoms of Depression:

The symptoms of depression can be complex and vary widely between people. You may feel, or experience, one or more of the following:

- Lasting feelings of low mood, sadness, guilt, despair.
- Feeling hopeless and helpless.
- Lack of interest and enjoyment (even in activities you once used to enjoy).
- Lack of energy or motivation.
- Sleep or appetite disturbance.
- Low self-confidence or self-esteem.
- Lack of concentration and difficulty with making decisions.
- Suicidal thoughts, or thoughts of harming yourself (these can just be thoughts)
- Wanting to isolate yourself from other people.

## Causes of depression:

**Life events** - illness, loneliness, bereavement, redundancy, giving birth.

**Thinking styles** – persistent negative expectations and assumptions.

**Family history** - if someone in your immediate family has experienced depression, there is an increased chance that you will develop similar feelings.

## What can I do about it?

**Attend the education programmes** – These will help you challenge and change negative thought patterns of how we view the world and ourselves. Engaging in cognitive behavioural techniques will help you to understand your thoughts and behaviour and how they affect your emotional state, so you are well equipped to improve how you feel. These programmes are found to be highly effective as part of your treatment.

**Breaking the cycle** - Depression often leads to isolation, which only leads to greater feelings of depression. Talking to other people and getting out and about is a good place to start, even when it is the last thing that you feel like doing. Find activities that are helpful for you and give you a boost.

**The Healthy Minds psychological therapy** – Here you will have the opportunity to speak to psychological wellbeing practitioners, high intensity therapists and counsellors.

### Information booklets on:

- Understanding depression
- Understanding mental health problems
- How to improve and maintain your mental wellbeing

Can be found in Mind's Booklet Shop at  
<http://shop.mind.org.uk/shop/booklets>