

Diagnosis

Your GP is a good starting point. He or she will ask about your life and your symptoms. Your GP may also suggest some blood or urine tests to see if there is any other medical condition that is causing the symptoms. If you would rather come and talk to an Amian counselor in confidence first, contact us to arrange an appointment. (0845 603 5667)

Treatments

The two major approaches are talking (psychological) therapies such as counseling and psychotherapy and treatment with antidepressant medication. Your treatment will depend upon how serious the depression is. Mild depression can be helped by regular exercise. Look after yourself by eating healthily and don't smoke or drink alcohol which can make you feel worse.

Medication

There are several different types of antidepressant medication. Some people experience side effects on one medication but not another, so it is important to find the right one for you.



SSRIs (selective serotonin re-uptake inhibitors) such as fluoxetine, and paroxetine (Prozac and seroxat) are the most commonly prescribed. They work by raising the levels of the natural chemical serotonin in the brain, which in turn tends to lift the mood.

Tricyclics: are as effective as SSRIs but can have different side effects. These work by raising the levels of serotonin and noradrenaline in the brain, again tending to lift the mood.

There are many other types of antidepressant and it is important that you ask your GP about the type they prescribe. Antidepressants usually take about four to six weeks to begin to have an effect and normally you will need to take them for at least 6 months. When stopping the medication your GP will normally reduce the dose gradually over a four week period.

Remember with depression, taking the first step to get help is often the hardest. Amian are available to you 24/7 for advice, information and appointments to see an experienced counsellor / psychotherapist.

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Amian are there to assist. Our service is free to staff and confidential.

Please call us 24/7 on 0845 603 5667

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bacp workplace
British Association for
Counselling & Psychotherapy



COPING WITH DEPRESSION



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DEPRESSION



Around one in four women and one in ten men have depression serious enough to need treatment at some point in their lives. You are said to have depression when your feelings don't go away quickly or are so bad that they are interfering with everyday life.

Mild Depression :Doesn't normally stop you leading your everyday life but makes everything harder to do and seems less worthwhile

Moderate Depression :Has a significant impact on your daily life

Severe Depression : Daily activities are almost impossible. You may have physical symptoms including tiredness and loss of appetite.

Dysthymia : Chronic mild depression (lasting at least 2 years)

Bipolar Affective Disorder: A type of depression where mood swings between very high and very low.

Seasonal Affective Disorder: Usually experience big mood swings at different times of the year.

Postnatal Depression: Following childbirth.

Symptoms of Depression

The number of symptoms you may experience will depend upon the type of depression. The main emotional symptoms include;

- Continuous low mood, may be worse in the mornings
- Feeling irritable, crying a lot
- Loss of interest / pleasure in activities
- Loss of self confidence
- Lack of energy, tiredness and poor concentration
- Difficulty in making decisions
- Feeling helpless or hopeless
- Feeling guilty, restless or agitated
- Thoughts about suicide

Physical Symptoms include:

- Trouble sleeping– possibly taking a long time to go to sleep and waking up early
- Disturbed eating patterns-loss of appetite or eating too much
- Loss of sex drive (libido) and unexplained aches and pains.



People who are depressed may also often feel very anxious. Around half of the people who have an episode of depression will have at least one more episode. The exact causes of depression are not known. It may develop due to a combination of factors and it is different for each person. With all of us, the likelihood of experiencing depression may increase if we experience the following;

- Experience stressful events, such as bereavement, divorce or losing your job
- Have a long term serious illness such as diabetes, cancer and arthritis
- Have a pessimistic personality type
- Drink too much alcohol (this may be part of the depression or a consequence)
- Have depression in your family (if one of your parents has severe depression, you are eight times more likely to experience it yourself)

Depression is linked to how your brain sends chemical signals (neurotransmitters) from nerve to nerve. The neurotransmitters called noradrenaline and serotonin are out of balance with people experiencing depression.

If you are depressed, recognising the problem is the first yet hardest step.

