

DEPRESSION



Depression is a common but serious mood disorder, however everyone experiences tough times. Young people need to be encouraged and supported to find helpful, adaptive and safe ways to cope with their thoughts and feelings.

**IF A YOUNG PERSON HAS TAKEN AN OVERDOSE OR IN IMMINENT DANGER
CALL 999**

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Mood:

- Low mood/mood swings/tearfulness.
- Feeling hopeless, not "seeing the point" in anything.
- Anxiety/agitation/increased reassurance seeking.
- Loss of motivation and energy.
- Lack of patience or irritability.

Thinking:

- Feeling guilty, overwhelmed.
- Self-doubt and loss of self-esteem/low self-esteem.
- Difficulties making decisions/concentration.
- Forgetfulness.
- Fear about the future.
- Self-harm or thoughts about ending their life.

Behaviour:

- Struggles to complete daily tasks.
- School refusal/deterioration in academic performance.
- Poor personal hygiene.
- Loss of interest in previously enjoyed activities.
- More withdrawn/isolating self from friends or family.
- Uncommunicative.

LINKS

Young Minds

<https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/for-parents/parents-guide-to-support-a-z/parents-guide-to-support-depression/>

Prevention of Young Suicide

<https://www.papyrus-uk.org/>

Mood Juice

www.moodjuice.scot.nhs.uk

RESOURCES

Crisis Plan Template

<http://mentalhealthrecovery.com/info-center/crisis-plan-form/>

Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) Templates

<http://www.cwp.nhs.uk/about-us/our-campaigns/person-centred-framework/recovery-toolbox/wellness-recovery-action-plan-wrap/>

Headspace

(Guided meditation and Mindfulness App)

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS (Continued)

Physical:

- Headaches.
- Stomach and digestive upset.
- Change of appetite (over or under eating).
- Changes to sleep patterns (over sleeping or insomnia).
- Pain without specific reason.
- Fatigue/loss of energy or highly agitated.

TOP TIPS

- Let the young person know you want to understand, help and support.
- Find time; don't rush the conversation.
- Stay calm yourself.
- Be prepared for a young person to deny or play down a difficulty.
- If your child does not want to talk, see if they will write you a note, email or text message about how they feel or would rather speak to someone else (e.g. a GP, school counsellor or helpline).
- Try to think together of ways to handle strong feelings that don't involve risk behaviour.
- Break down goals into small steps. Ask how you can support or help them achieve these.
- Make a mini-crisis plan (please see link in Resources Section)
- Try to establish a routine which encourages young people to look after themselves by eating well, exercising, sleeping and identify hobbies or activities outside education.
- Encourage young people to not self-medicate through alcohol, drugs, nicotine or caffeine.

FURTHER HELP

- Speak to your child's/young person's school.
- Speak to your doctor.
- Contact your local Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service.
- Contact Young Minds Parent Helpline (0808 802 5544).