

Are you suffering from Depression?

Depression is a mental illness that affects every individual in completely different ways. There is no specific age group, anyone can suffer from depression, even children. Depression isn't just a temporary bad mood or feeling 'blue' for a few days as a lot of people perceive it, depression is a long-term condition that can affect its sufferers daily on a life long scale if not treated correctly, although treatments may not always be successful, and everyone suffers and reacts to depression in a different way, as well as the treatments.

There is evidence that depression is mainly a biological problem, originating from defective brain chemistry, although this is disputed as there is no doubt that various other factors contribute to depression, such as family history, daily life events, and lack of support from family and friends on a day to day basis all have a part to play usually. In extreme cases, depression can even result to suicide.

It's important to talk to someone before it reaches this level, whether it's a family member, a counsellor or a GP, communication is the first step to resolving depression.

Common symptoms of depression

Although everyone tends to show different symptoms of depression, the most common can include:

- Sleep changes- sleeping more or less than usual.
- Loss of energy.
- Feeling of helplessness.
- Reckless behavior.
- Appetite or weight changes.
- Anger or feeling irritable.
- Unexplained aches and pains.
- Feeling 'blue' or sad for prolonged periods of time.
- Lack of concentration and interest in daily activities.
- Suicidal thoughts

Depression & How to deal with it.



Types of depression

Clinical depression

Major depression

Persistent depressive disorder

Bipolar disorder

Seasonal affective disorder

Psychotic depression

Peripartum depression

Premenstrual dysphoric disorder

Situational depression

Atypical depression

Who is at risk of depression?

According to statistics, over 20% of the population have suffered from depression at some point in their life's, some may not even realize they are sufferers. There is no age range for depression, although its more common in certain age ranges, anyone can suffer from this illness, whether it's a child or an elderly person or anything in between.

It's a complex illness with a range of different factors including-

Genetics- depression can run in families and this is a common cause for the illness. People with a close family member who suffer with depression are much more likely to develop the condition, compared with the generic population.

Childhood factors- If a child experiences something traumatic in their childhood, they can be likely to develop depression as a result. Although there is no evidence of this, negative thinking and a sense of helplessness can be caused by a disadvantaged childhood which will often lead to depression at some point in life.

Stress- Stress as a whole is responsible for people becoming depressed, whether it's financial difficulties, work problems or even family troubles, each of these problems in daily life can result in depression which in the majority of cases will put more pressure on the individual and lead to even higher stress levels

Physical illness- It is estimated that roughly 6% of clinical depression is a result of physical illness. Cancer, AIDS, heart disease, diabetes and neurological diseases such as Alzheimer's can all cause depression.

Where & how can I get help for depression?

If you feel like you are displaying any of the above symptoms, its likely you could be suffering from depression. The first step is to recognize this and to seek help and guidance. Communication is one of the key factors in your journey to cure your depression, speak to a family member or close friend or contact a medical professional or your GP.

Some helplines and services dedicated to preventing and curing depression are as follows-

Samaritans- 116 123

(24 hours a day, 7 days a week.)

CALM, specifically for men tackling depression. 0800 58 58 58

(Daily, 5pm- midnight)

Mind

0300 123 3393

SANE

0300 304 7000

(daily, 4.30-10.30pm)