

Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Services

Depression



Coventry City Council

www.coventry.gov.uk/ohsw

Depression

There are times when we all feel low, but there is usually a good reason for it, e.g. being frustrated, responding to change, receiving bad news or losing someone or something. After a short while the feelings and mood lift and we feel better.

It is when the individual stays 'stuck' in the low mood, that we can say they are depressed. This can be moderately depressed, or severely depressed. This leaflet refers to such individuals.

Depression is a common experience and can affect any one of us, coming upon us either gradually or suddenly, with or without a reason.

What are the symptoms?

- Disturbed sleep pattern e.g. early waking
- Loss or gain in appetite/weight
- Lack of energy and motivation
- Feeling physically ill
- Restlessness, irritability
- Difficulty in concentrating
- Loss of interest in previously enjoyed activities
- Feelings of sadness and tearfulness
- Feelings of guilt, anxiousness and hopelessness
- Difficulty coping with everyday tasks
- Withdrawal
- Loss of confidence and self-esteem
- Loss of interest in sex

If you recognise some or all of these symptoms the likelihood is that you are depressed.



*If you would like
an appointment to
see a counsellor
please contact your
manager or HR*

So what help is available?

Self-help for individuals with mild depression:

- Get out of bed as soon as you wake
- Eat regular and well balanced meals
- Keep yourself occupied - do gentle exercises
- Avoid being alone for too long
- Talk about your feelings to someone you can trust
- Do not overload yourself with too much work
- Avoid the use of alcohol or drugs to relieve feelings

For individuals with severe or more persistent depression:

Counselling

At times, the opportunity to talk things through with a counsellor enables individuals to understand and deal with the issues causing problems in their lives.

Your GP may have a counsellor attached to the surgery.

Sometimes problems can seem so deep and disturbing, the individual seems unable to cope with the feelings. In such cases, individuals may benefit from being prescribed an anti-depressant to take the 'edge' off their feelings, enabling them to explore and work with a counsellor at reducing or resolving problem issues.

Individuals on medication are able to be at work. However, it is always advisable to discuss this matter with your GP.

In some severe situations, certain individuals are unable to benefit initially from the services of a counsellor. This may occur where the individual is so clinically depressed, that all they can usually feel are feelings of utter worthlessness and intense guilt. In such cases, it is imperative that individuals seek medical help via their GP. Only when the medication is having effect and the individual is improving, should counselling start.

Useful information regarding anti-depressants

- Dosages vary depending on the anti-depressant and the individual's needs
- Dosage is usually started off at a low level and gradually increased until effective
- Mild side-effects are sometimes experienced e.g. dry mouth, constipation, temporary drowsiness and nausea for the first few days
- Side-effects usually diminish
- It is important to realise that it can take up to three weeks before an improvement is felt
- It is normal for medication to be prescribed for at least three months
- Once recovery is established - anti-depressants will be slowly reduced
- Setbacks sometimes do occur or endure, rarely does the road to recovery go in a straight line

When medication is prescribed, you should be seeing your doctor regularly, who can offer re-assurances about any health concerns you may have. If the first anti-depressant does not appear effective after the first few weeks, do not despair, for there are other types, which might be more suited to your particular needs.

Remember, no matter how badly you feel today, you will recover.



List of organisations and telephone numbers:

Depressives Associated

P.O. Box 1022, London SE1 7QB

Information, support and understanding for people who suffer with depression and for relatives who want help.

Mind Drop-in Centre

Telephone: 024 7655 2847

Samaritans

Telephone: 024 7667 8678

Caludon Centre Hospital Help-line

Freephone: 024 7693 2500

Monday-Friday, 8.00am – 6.00pm

Tamarind Centre

Mental Health for Ethnic Minorities

Telephone: 024 7622 5512

Panahghar

Telephone: 024 7622 8952

Cruse (bereavement)

Telephone: 024 7667 0714

Sudden & Neo-Natal Deaths (Sands)

Helpline: 020 7436 5881

Relate

Telephone: 024 7622 5863

Domestic Violence (Coventry Haven Listening Post)

Telephone: 0800 111 4998

Crisis Resolution Team

Telephone: 0845 604 4000

Mental Health Helpline (24 hours)

Telephone: 0800 616171

Lighthouse (Christian Care Ministry)

Telephone: 024 7644 0095

Further information:

Occupational Health, Safety & Wellbeing Service
Thomas Yeoman House, Canal Basin, Coventry CV1 4LY

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Website: www.coventry.gov.uk/ohsw

email: ohsw@coventry.gov.uk

