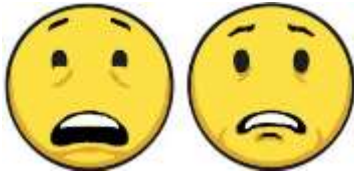


## Low mood and depression



If you are feeling very upset, suicidal or in need of emotional support you can phone NHS 24 on 111.



Being unwell can have an impact on your mental health. It is not unusual to experience lower mood after having COVID. It can take a while to understand what you have been through and the impact this had.



If you have not been able to do the activities you would usually do, this can have a big impact on your mood as well.

## Symptoms of low mood and depression

Signs and symptoms of low mood can include:



- sadness
- feeling anxious
- worry
- tiredness
- low self-esteem
- frustration
- anger
- feelings of hopelessness



A low mood usually lifts after a few days or weeks. However, a low mood that does not go away can be depression.

As well as the symptoms above, depression can include:



- low mood lasting 2 weeks or more
- not getting any enjoyment out of life
- feeling hopeless
- feeling tired or low energy
- not being able to concentrate
- comfort eating or not wanting to eat
- sleeping more than usual, or being unable to sleep
- having suicidal thoughts or thoughts about harming yourself



If negative feelings do not go away you may need to make some changes and get some support.



If you have depression symptoms most of the time for more than two weeks, you should visit your GP.

# Managing low mood

## Look after yourself



Simple things can make a big difference to your mood. Try to:

- stick to a routine
- limit alcohol
- have a well-balanced diet
- do some exercise
- get enough sleep

## Connect with others

Speak to family and friends. If talking feels too much, try to stay in touch through messages instead.



## Take part in meaningful activities

When people feel low, they sometimes do not feel like doing their usual activities. You might also find that you cannot do all the activities you used to do while you are recovering.



Try to think about small activities you can complete every day. This will make you feel you have achieved something.



## Write a recovery diary

Try writing down how your recovery is going. It can be helpful to look back on the progress you have made.



It can also be helpful to write down any difficult thoughts and feelings you have.



## Be kind to yourself

Getting better takes time. It is important to rest and recover.

## When to get help



If you are still feeling down after a couple of weeks, talk to your GP.

It is important to get help if:

- you have symptoms of depression that are not getting better
- your work, relationships or interests are affected by your mood



If you are diagnosed with depression, your GP will discuss available treatment. This can include self-help, talking therapies and medication.

## More help and information



If you're feeling low and want to talk to someone, you can phone Breathing Space on **0800 83 85 87**.

The Breathing Space phonenumber is available:

- 24 hours at weekends (6pm Friday to 6am Monday)
- 6pm to 2am on weekdays (Monday to Thursday)