

Finding Your Way Through Depression

Depression can feel overwhelming, but you're not alone, and help is available. If you've been feeling down for more than two weeks without a clear reason, it might be time to reach out. Early action can make a big difference in finding relief.

Signs

Depression affects everyone differently, but common signs include:

- Changes in sleep or appetite
- Low energy and difficulty concentrating
- Loss of interest in things you usually enjoy
- Withdrawing from others
- Feeling hopeless, helpless, or overwhelmed
- Dwelling on Negative Thoughts

Risk Factors

Some factors that may contribute to depression include:

- Family history of depression
- Physical illness or chronic pain
- Trauma or high levels of anxiety
- Alcohol or drug use
- Life stressors like work conflict, unemployment, or relationship issues

Goals: Recovery takes time, but small, achievable goals can help. Even a short walk around the block can boost your mood. Prioritising sleep, eating a balanced diet, and cutting back on caffeine, alcohol, and sugar can also make a difference.

Physical Health: Physical and mental health go hand in hand. Exercise helps reduce stress hormones and boosts feel-good chemicals like serotonin and endorphins. Prioritise good sleep, eat well, and find small ways to stay active.

Mindfulness: Being caught up in negative thoughts can make things feel worse. Mindfulness—focusing on what you see, hear, and feel in the moment—can help bring a sense of calm. Try asking yourself, “Is there another way to see this situation?”

Thoughts: Try to shift your perspective by looking for shades of grey rather than extremes. When negative thoughts arise, challenge them by asking, “Is there another way to see this?”

Support: Reaching out isn't a sign of weakness—it's a step toward feeling better. Talking to someone can help lighten the load and keep you moving forward.

Where to get help:

Your GP

Your local Medicare Mental Health Centre

Lifeline: 13 11 14

Beyond Blue: www.beyondblue.org.au

Black Dog Institute: www.blackdoginstitute.org.au



SCAN FOR MORE TIP SHEETS

