



# Talking Therapies

## What is depression?

Feeling fed up and low in mood is a normal part of life. When difficulties or upsetting events occur it is not unusual to feel down and to not enjoy what is happening. Likewise when good things happen, a person may experience pleasure and a sense of achievement.

Usually the reasons for low mood are clear (e.g. a stressful situation, a relationship difficulty such as feeling let down by someone or a practical problem) and the drop in mood only lasts for a short period of time. Occasionally a person's mood may seem to drop for little or no obvious reason and it may be difficult, to begin with, to know quite why. In some cases depression can worsen and completely dominate the person's life. When someone feels very low for more than two weeks and feels like this day after day, week after week, this is called a depressive episode. When depression occurs like this, it affects the person's mood and thinking. It leads to altered behaviour and creates a range of physical symptoms in their body.

Depression is often accompanied by other feelings such as guilt, shame, anger and anxiety.

## How common is depression?

Depressive illness is a common experience, which affects about one in twenty people at some time in their lives. You may know friends or relatives who have either felt depressed or have been treated for depression in the past. Depression can affect anyone. Some well-known people have suffered from depression. You may have seen television programmes or read books about their experience of overcoming depression.

## What are the symptoms of depression?

There are different types of symptoms for depression which involve our thoughts, behaviours, emotions and bodies. Examples of these symptoms are outlined below:

