



# How to help if you're experiencing low mood/depression

## What is low mood/depression?

Feeling sad is a normal reaction to everyday life experiences. However, when these feelings continue and begin to interfere with your enjoyment of life, you may be feeling depressed. In its mildest form, depression can mean you feel low.

This may not stop you from leading a normal life, but it makes everything harder to do and less worthwhile. Depression can be caused by lots of things such as life experiences, family history, bullying, feeling you have a lack of support, or it may even run in your family. Depression is one of the most common types of mental illness. Although it's hard to feel optimistic when you're depressed, there is lots of support available to help you feel better.

## How depression might affect you

You might experience different feelings and symptoms such as:

**Feelings:** worthless, hopeless, moody, guilty or helpless.

**Behaviours:** tearful, irritable, withdrawn, avoiding friends and family, lack of interest in appearance, difficulty in concentrating.

**Thoughts:** 'I don't deserve any help', 'What's the point?' Dismissing the positives, negative thinking patterns, including not wanting to live anymore. You feel flat and might not enjoy things you once did, like hobbies, and even foods seem bland in taste.

**Physical signs:** tired, eating changes, changes in sleep pattern, aches & pains, slowing of speech.

You might feel like harming yourself. You may find it hard to go off to sleep, wake a few times through the night, or wake very early. Everything feels an effort to do when before you had energy.

## What you can do if you're feeling depressed

1. Break things down into small steps and be proud of yourself when you achieve even small things.
2. Exercise regularly and eat a healthy, balanced diet, avoiding sugary/fatty foods and stimulants such as coffee or energy drinks.
3. Try to continue to do activities you previously enjoyed - even if the enjoyment has lessened.
4. Think of factors that may be contributing to your low mood, and talk to someone you trust about how you're feeling, a friend, family member or at school, find a teacher, mentor, counsellor or school nurse.
5. Think of a safe place you can go to relax.
6. Aim to be around people who are caring and positive. Both negative and positive thoughts are contagious.
7. Ask for help from a family member, friend, school counsellor/teacher or go to your local GP.

If you're still feeling depressed,  
it might be time to talk to someone at your school, or your GP.  
Or, visit [www.liverpoolcamhs.com/need-advice](http://www.liverpoolcamhs.com/need-advice)