

What is low mood?

It is natural for us to feel sad, low or down at different times. We feel these human emotions in response to things that happen to us. For example, we may feel sad over an argument with a parent or friend, or if you go through a breakup. The death of someone close to you could also lead to feelings of sadness.

When we're feeling sad, discouraged or hopeless, usually these feelings pass in due course. However, if the feelings interfere with day-to-day life and continue for weeks, months or even longer, or if they come back again and again for a few days at a time, it could be a sign that you may be suffering from low mood.

IT'S OKAY
TO NOT
BE OKAY.

Low mood can affect different people in different ways. There are many reasons for how it can affect people. Below are just some of the reasons for how it can look:

- not wanting to do things that you usually enjoy
- avoiding friends or social situations
- sleeping more or less than normal
- eating more or less than normal
- easily irritated
- tearful and or upset
- being self-critical
- feeling hopeless
- urge to self-harm
- feeling tired and not having any energy
- unable to concentrate



Just because you experience one or more of these symptoms, it doesn't mean you're definitely affected by low mood. However, if you do feel as though something isn't right, you deserve to feel better and to get the right support.

It can sometimes be hard to explain your thoughts and feelings to others. You might find it difficult to talk about feeling low and the more overwhelming it feels, the more isolated and lonely you might become.

And it's OK to say you're not

The first step would be to talk to someone you like and trust, like a teacher, mentor, relative or friend. You can also speak to your GP if you have any concerns.



Self-care tips

- ✓ Try to get some good sleep as sleeping too little, or too much can be a daily problem. It can help to improve your mood and increase energy levels.

Recommended apps to help with sleep:

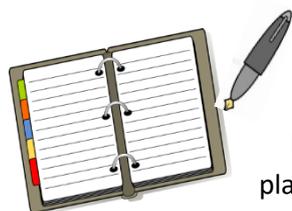
Calm has strategies to help you fall asleep

Headspace provides calming mediation and mindfulness to help if you're feeling stressed or anxious. It also helps if you're having trouble sleeping or concentrating.



- ✓ Think about what you're eating. Eating regularly and keeping your blood sugar stable can help with your mood and energy levels too.

- ✓ Try to do some physical activity. Physical exercise can be a challenge but activities like yoga, swimming or walking can help with boosting your mood. If you don't feel confident doing exercise, you could start off with smaller activities - such as gentle chair-based exercises in your own home - and build from there. There are lots of videos you can find on YouTube to help get you started.



- ✓ Keeping a mood diary or making notes on your phone can help you keep track of any changes in how you're feeling, and you might find that you have more good days than you think. It can also help you notice if any activities, places or people have an effect on your mood, for better or worse.

Some of these ideas may be useful, but remember that different things work for different people at different times. Only try out what feels comfortable, and try not to put too much pressure on yourself. If something isn't working or doesn't feel possible at the moment, you can try something else, or come back to it later on when you feel able to.

Other helpful websites

CALM (Campaign Against Living Miserably)

Provides support to anyone in the UK who is feeling down and needs to talk or find information.

Free webchat service available.

Phone: 0800 58 58 58

Opening times: 5pm - midnight, 365 days a year

Kooth - offers a free online counselling service, accessible through mobile phones/tablets etc. Helps to deal with mood problems.

Headspace Greenwich - a web based programme with tips/advice about mood and anxiety.