



FEELING SAD FACTSHEET

This factsheet will provide you with information and links to helpful websites about what to do if you are feeling sad.

Feeling sad

Everyone feels fed up and sad sometimes but these feelings usually pass within a week or two. Sometimes these feelings continue and interfere with everyday life.

"I feel so fed up I feel like crying."

Am I sad or am I depressed?

We hear a lot of people saying *"I'm depressed"* when really they are just feeling sad or having an 'off day'. We all feel sad at times and this can be a reaction to something that has happened in our lives. This is a normal reaction. Sadness becomes a problem when it takes over your everyday life and affects your normal routines, activities and general daily functioning.

Why do people get depressed?

There are a lot of factors that contribute to someone feeling depressed. These include genetics, environment and life events.

"My friend says she's depressed but she has a big house and a nice family...what has she got to be depressed about?"

Genetics

Depression runs in families and sometimes people can inherit genes that make it more likely for them to get depressed.

Life events

Difficult life events such as the loss of a family member, friend or even a pet, when parents separate or changing schools can all cause upset and can sometimes lead on to depression.

Environment

Living in a stressful or unhappy environment can sometimes affect your self-esteem and lead on to depression.

Other factors such as poverty, homelessness, a breakdown in relationships or domestic violence can also have a severe impact on your mood.

"I am irritable and moody all the time and can't be bothered to do anything."

How do I know if I am depressed?

If you are depressed, some of the symptoms you have could include:

- feelings of sadness most of the time for no apparent reason
- reduced energy levels and feeling tired all of the time
- unable to undertake hobbies and activities that you previously enjoyed
- feeling increasingly irritable and anxious
- isolating yourself from friends and family
- poor concentration span
- significant increase/decrease in appetite
- change in sleep patterns – unable to fall asleep/get up in the morning
- low self-esteem
- no interest in things in the present or the future
- thoughts of self-harm/death/suicide

If you have some of these symptoms most of the time for approximately 2 weeks or more you should seek help from someone you know and trust.

What can I do if I feel I need further help?

If you feel what you are experiencing is more than just passing sadness, you need to tell someone you trust – this could be a family member, teacher or trusted adult. They will listen to you and help seek the appropriate support that you need.

VISIT THESE USEFUL WEBSITES

www.kooth.com

Free online counselling and support

www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/low-mood-and-depression/

NHS Choices webpage offers practical advice, interactive tools, videos and audio guides to help you feel mentally and emotionally better.

www.annafreud.org/on-my-mind/

Website contains information, advice and resources to help young people support their own mental health, including signposting to sources of support in times of crisis and tools to help young people manage their own wellbeing.

www.themix.org.uk

The Mix is a UK based charity that provides free, confidential support for young people under 25 via online, social and mobile. It has lots of information and resources on their website.

www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/your-feelings/feelings-emotions/depression-feeling-sad/

Information & advice on Childline webpage