

### What is Depression?

Depression is a common illness, which will affect one in five people during their lifetime. It can involve feelings of hopelessness, tiredness, low self-esteem, sleeping problems and physical aches and pains.

### What is normal sleep?

There are two types of sleep. As we drift off to sleep we begin a stage of 'slow wave' sleep which lasts for about an hour and a half. After that we go into a state known as Rapid Eye Movement (REM) sleep which lasts for about quarter of an hour – this is when we dream and the brain is very active. We move between the two different types of sleep throughout the night and both are important for recharging the batteries and making sure that we wake up feeling refreshed.

### What goes wrong?

Problems are caused by changes in the sleep pattern so that the quality of sleep itself is disturbed. Sleep problems can occur for a number of reasons including pain, overeating, stimulant drugs, a lack of light and alcohol. Older people often find sleep problems particularly difficult as they already have changing sleeping patterns as a result of their age. A sleep problem can also be caused directly or indirectly by depression

### Sleep problems in depression

Depressed people often experience changes in their sleep patterns. Some actually sleep more than normal, whilst others have difficulty getting off to sleep, wake early, or are unable to get back to sleep. Anxiety and agitation can also cause frequent waking during the night. Because of the variety of causes, poor sleep may be accepted as a fact of life by some patients and their doctors, and may be missed as a sign of depression.

People with sleep problems due to depression can be treated with antidepressants, which help restore normal sleep as well as helping to alleviate depression. However, some modern antidepressants may cause or exacerbate existing sleep problems early on in treatment—check with your doctor if you are worried about this. You can also contact Depression Alliance for a free leaflet on antidepressants.

### Consequences of poor sleep

Poor sleep may make many of the symptoms of depression worse, causing a lack of energy, irritability in the morning and late in the day, headaches due to tension and anxiety, and poor concentration

You may also have difficulty driving or operating machinery. It is important to treat sleep problems seriously and to seek advice from a doctor who understands that the sleep problem may be due to depression.

After having had a bad night's sleep some people try to 'catch up' by sleeping during the day. Sleeping at irregular times can further disturb your circadian rhythm (bodyclock) so it is important to keep to a regular bedtime routine.

### Ways of coping with sleep problems

If your sleep problems are linked to depression, you will need to consider how best to tackle this. Most people find that a combination of self-help, medication and talking treatments works best. Contact Depression Alliance for more information on treatments and self-help techniques.

### The following hints may also help:

- Physical exercise can help to prepare your body for a good night's sleep.
- Ensure that your bedroom is used only as a place for sleeping and has a relaxing atmosphere. Avoid coffee and other stimulants in the evening. Also try and avoid heavy meals late at night.
- There are many ways to relax - yoga, aromatherapy, listening to music - find out what works for you and give yourself time to unwind.
- Herbal products are also available which claim to provide relief from sleep problems. Always check with your doctor or pharmacist before taking these products.

### Tranquillisers

In some cases, doctors prescribe tranquillisers. These have three disadvantages for people affected by depression:

- Daytime sedation - People can feel drowsy throughout the day and their reactions may be slower than normal.
- Potential dependency - Unlike antidepressants, tranquillisers can cause dependence.
- Little effect on underlying depression - Tranquillisers have little or no effect on depression. Long-term use of tranquillisers can actually worsen the symptoms of depression.

### Contact Us

I would like to support the work of Depression Alliance.

Please accept my gift of £

I would like Depression Alliance to claim the tax back on this donation, and on any subsequent donation I make.

For every donation you make to us, we can now claim back the tax paid (equivalent to 28p in every pound), provided you pay an equal amount of income tax or capital gains tax. Please tick the box above if you would like to make your money go even further at no extra cost to you.\*

I would like to become a member of Depression Alliance and enclose my membership fee of (please tick relevant box):

- £10 (full-fee)                       £5 (unwaged/OAP/student)
- £20 (company rate)                 £15 (European rate)
- £20 (International rate)

I would like to find out more about Depression Alliance

I would like to pay

By cheque\*\*/postal order for £

By card, please deduct £  from my:

MasterCard                       CAF card

VISA card

### PLEASE COMPLETE IN BLOCK CAPITALS

Name as written on card

Card No

Exp date

Signature  Date

Title

Forename

Surname

Address

Postcode

E-mail

Please return this form in an envelope to: Depression Alliance, 35, Westminster Bridge Road, London SE1 7JB

Data protection: From time to time, we will write with details about our work. Please tick this box if you would prefer not to hear from us. Your details will never be passed onto to any third party without your prior consent.

\* You must pay an amount of income tax (and/or capital gains tax) which is at least equal to the value of what we claim back in that tax year (currently 28p for every pound you give in that tax year). If you pay tax at a higher rate, you can claim further tax relief in your Self Assessment return.

\*\* Please make cheques payable to Depression Alliance

- You are not alone – sleep problems are a common problem with depression
- Depression is an illness, which can be treated
- Contact your doctor and talk through your problems
- Continue to take the treatments you have been prescribed until you are advised how and when to stop

Useful Organisations

UKPPG Medication Helpline  
020 7919 2999  
(11–12.30, 2–5 Mon–Fri, excluding Bank Holidays)

Saneline  
08457 678 000  
www.sane.org.uk  
(open 12pm – 2am every day)

NHS Direct  
0845 46 47  
www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk  
(Open 24 hours)k

Depression Alliance

Depression Alliance is the leading UK charity for people affected by depression. We work to relieve this treatable condition by providing information, support and understanding. We also campaign to raise awareness amongst the general public about the realities of depression.

Depression Alliance coordinates a national network of self-help groups so that people with depression can share experiences and coping strategies with others in similar situations.

For more information about self-help groups in your area, as well as our other services for people affected by depression, please complete the form overleaf.



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You can also contact us via our main number 0845 123 23 20. You will automatically be directed to the relevant regional office, and all calls will be charged at the local rate.

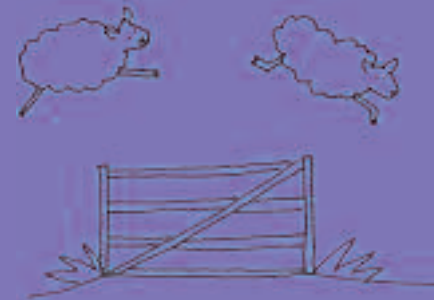
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(Registered office at the London address)  
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Depression affects one in five of us at some point in our life

If you have depression and are experiencing sleeping problems, don't worry – you are not alone.



If you are worried about a friend or relative who is depressed, Depression Alliance can help.