

Condition:



Clinical Depression

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What is clinical depression?

Clinical depression, often referred to as **major depression** is diagnosed in patients who present symptoms such as depressed mood, lack of interest in activities, sleep problems, change in appetite, poor concentration or thoughts of death/suicide over a period of two or more weeks.

Reference



Click here to visit NHS to find out more
[Website \(link opens in new window\)](#)

Clinical depression and work

Clinical depression, can at times severely affect many areas of your life, including your ability to perform at work. In some cases, those who suffer from clinical depression find themselves unable to perform daily tasks required in the work place, and may find it difficult to cope with tasks that were once manageable.

- The first step in handling depression at work is to recognise it for what it is.
- Being depressed need not be permanent and the symptoms can be alleviated if you are correctly diagnosed.
- You should seek professional medical advice and this – in most cases – means booking an appointment with your GP.
- Don't be worried about taking time off work to do this. It could be time that is well spent and allows you to cope in the long run thereby avoiding a longer stint off work later because matters have been allowed to get too far.
- As well as seeking professional assistance, there are several things you can try which may help you to deal with depression. Many will help you to continue functioning in your job. These tips are listed below:
 - ▶ Tell someone you trust
 - ▶ Ask for help
 - ▶ Be realistic about what you can achieve do not over commit or take on extra hours

How do I know I have clinical depression? What does it feel like?

Here are a list of some of the most common thoughts feelings and behaviors associated with clinical depression:

Feelings of sadness, tearfulness, emptiness or hopelessness

Angry outbursts, irritability or frustration, even over small matters

Loss of interest or pleasure in most or all normal activities, such as work, sex, hobbies or sports

Sleep disturbances, including insomnia or sleeping too much

Tiredness and lack of energy, so even small tasks take extra effort

Reduced appetite and weight loss or increased cravings for food and weight gain

Anxiety, agitation or restlessness

Slowed thinking, speaking or body movements

Feelings of worthlessness or guilt, fixating on past failures or self-blame

Trouble thinking, concentrating, making decisions and remembering things

Frequent or recurrent thoughts of death, suicidal thoughts, suicide attempts

Unexplained physical problems, such as back pain or headaches

Symptoms are usually severe enough to cause noticeable problems in relationships with others or in day-to-day activities, such as work, school or social activities.

Causes of clinical depression

There's no single cause of depression, it can be hard to pin point why, it can occur for a variety of reasons and it has many different triggers.

- You may be more vulnerable to depression if you have certain personality traits, such as low self-esteem or being overly self-critical. This may be because of the genes you've inherited from your parents, your early life experiences, or both.
- For some people, an upsetting or stressful life event, such as bereavement, divorce, illness, redundancy, job or money worries, can be the cause.
- Different causes can often combine to trigger depression. For example, you may feel low after being ill and then experience a traumatic event, such as a bereavement, which brings on depression.
- People often talk about a "downward spiral" of events that leads to depression. For example, if your relationships with your partner breaks down, you're likely to feel low, you may stop seeing friends and family and you may start drinking more. All of this can make you feel worse and trigger depression.

Talking to your GP or another health care provider about clinical depression

Sometimes talking to a professional can be difficult particularly when talking about your feelings so it is worth writing a few notes to take with you in case your mind goes blank, it will also help you describe the feelings you are having.

Treatments for clinical depression

There are no physical tests for depression, but your GP may examine you and carry out some urine or blood tests to rule out other conditions that have similar symptoms, such as an underactive thyroid.

The main way your GP will tell if you have depression is by asking you lots of questions about your general health and how the way you're feeling is affecting you mentally and physically.

Try to be as open and honest as you can be with your answers. Describing your symptoms and how they're affecting you will help your GP determine whether you have depression and how severe it is to decide on the best treatment options for you.

Clinical depression can affect people of any age, however, clinical depression symptoms, even if severe; usually improve with psychological counselling, (talking therapy) antidepressant medications or a combination of the two.

Managing your clinical depression

There are a number of options you can try instead of, or alongside, medication and talking treatments.



Guided self-help

This is usually using ideas from cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) one-to-one with a mental health professional to learn problem solving techniques plus keeping a thought record writing thoughts down can be very therapeutic. Included below is a link to a template for a thought record.



Physical activity programmes

These are specifically designed for people with depression and run by qualified professionals.

You might also find these other treatments helpful, however many symptoms you're experiencing:

- Arts therapies
- Alternative and complementary therapies
- Mindfulness
- Peer support



Take notice

Try out Mindfulness as it is evidenced based to improve the symptoms of clinical depression.



Be Active

Exercise is evidenced to improve our moods so get out and about every day even if it is a short walk to the local shop. Use the positive endorphins released when you exercise to support your mood management.



Keep learning

Learning something new works as both a distraction and a motivator - try to take opportunities that you have around you to learn something new and develop on skills that you already have.



Connect

As mentioned above don't go it alone – talk and connect with other people even when you feel low.



Give back

Giving even when you feel very low can benefit you and others - give something back into the community or to people around you. For example get involved in a local project.

It is important to remember that with the right treatment or combination of treatments, symptoms can be managed and in time normal feelings return and you can recommence your daily routine.

Useful links

Reference



Click here to go to Sane's peer support forum
Website (link opens in new window)

Reference



Click here to go to Depression UK
Website (link opens in new window)

Reference



Click here to visit Mind
Website (link opens in new window)

Reference



Click here to visit Cognitive Therapy Guide
Website (link opens in new window)

Reference



Click to watch a video about depression
Video (link opens in new window)

Helplines



SANE
0845 767 8000
(6pm - 11pm)
[CLICK HERE TO EMAIL](#)



[Click here for apps that may help](#)