

## Getting Help

If you recognise the signs of depression in yourself or someone you know, it is important to seek help.

Visit your doctor and tell them how you feel.

You may need antidepressant pills to treat your symptoms, your doctor may refer you for counselling which will enable you to talk about your problems.

You may be referred to a local self help group where you can meet other people who really understand how you are feeling. This in itself can be a great source of comfort and relief knowing that you are not alone in the way you are feeling.

With the right support and help, most people recover.

### Useful telephone numbers:

|                                       |               |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|
| Havering Mind                         | 01708 457040  |
| Depression Alliance                   | 020 7633 9929 |
| The Association for Postnatal illness | 020 7386 0868 |
| The Samaritans                        | 01708 740000  |
| Havering Bereavement Service          | 01708 73423   |
| Relate                                | 01708 441722  |
| NHS Direct                            | 0845 46 47    |

# Depression



# Don't keep your feelings to yourself - talk to someone you can trust

## What is depression?

Depression is very common and will affect one in four of us at some stage in our lives.

In its mildest form, depression causes lowered mood, which doesn't stop us leading our normal lives but does make everything seem much harder and less worthwhile.

In its severest form, depression can be life threatening, and may make you feel like killing yourself or giving up the will to live.

Many of us show the signs of depression without realising their significance.

## What can cause depression?

- ◆ Bereavement, relationship problems, redundancy
- ◆ Childbirth
- ◆ Unemployment
- ◆ Homelessness
- ◆ Stress
- ◆ Physical illness
- ◆ Alcohol and drug misuse
- ◆ In fact any major life event can lead to depression

## Recognising the signs of depression

- ◆ Tiredness, lack of energy or enthusiasm
- ◆ Loss of concentration, inability to make decisions
- ◆ Loss of self confidence
- ◆ Feeling empty and despondent, useless or inadequate
- ◆ Avoiding friends and family
- ◆ Sleep problems, particularly waking up very early
- ◆ Eating more or less than usual with a consequential gain or loss in weight
- ◆ Loss of interest in sex and outward affection
- ◆ Feeling irritable or impatient
- Suicidal and morbid thoughts

## Some steps to help yourself

- ◆ Don't keep your feelings bottled up
- ◆ Try talking to someone you trust
- ◆ Eat well, even if you don't really feel like eating
- ◆ Find things to occupy your mind, things that keep you busy
- ◆ Try a brisk walk or some other exercise
- ◆ Don't be tempted to drown your sorrows
- ◆ If you can't sleep listen to the radio or watch television
- ◆ Contact your GP or seek other professional help
- ◆ Think about what works for you
- Remember you are not alone