



IT'S OKAY TO TALK

What is depression?

Most people, children as well as adults, feel low or 'blue' occasionally. Feeling sad is a normal reaction to experiences that are stressful or upsetting. However, when these feelings go on and on, take over your usual self and interfere with your whole life, it can become an illness. This illness is called 'depression'.

How common is it?

Depression usually starts in the teen years, more commonly as you near adulthood. It is less common in children under 12 years old. It can affect anybody, although it is also more common in girls compared to boys.

How do I know if I have depression?

Some of the symptoms you are suffering from depression include:

- being moody and irritable - easily upset, 'ratty' or tearful
- becoming withdrawn - avoiding friends, family and regular activities
- feeling guilty or bad, being self-critical and self-blaming - hating yourself
- feeling unhappy, miserable and lonely a lot of the time
- feeling hopeless and wanting to die
- finding it difficult to concentrate
- not looking after your personal appearance
- changes in sleep pattern: sleeping too little or too much
- feeling tired
- not interested in eating, eating little or too much
- suffering aches and pains, such as headaches or stomach-aches
- feeling you are not good looking.

If you have all or most of these signs and have had them over a long period of time – two weeks or more, it may mean that you are depressed. You may find it very difficult to talk about how you are feeling.

What causes depression?

There is no specific cause for depression. It is usually caused by a mixture of things, rather than any one thing alone such as:

- personal experiences can be a trigger. These include family breakdown, the death or loss of someone you love, neglect, abuse, bullying and physical illness.
- Depression can start if too many changes happen in your life too quickly.
- You are more likely to suffer from depression if you are under a lot of stress, have no one to share their worries with.
- Depression may run in families and can be more common if you already suffer from physical illness or difficulties.

What can I do if I am feeling low?

You can try a few things to see if it helps you feel better.

Simply talking to someone you trust, and who you feel understands, can lighten the burden. It can also make it easier to work out practical solutions to problems. For example, if you are going through a tough time talking to a coach; teammate can help.

Here are some things to try:

- talk to someone whom you trust and can help
- try to do some physical activity and eat healthy food
- try to keep yourself occupied by doing activities, even if you feel you do not really enjoy them
- try not to stay all alone in your room, especially during the day
- don't overstress yourself and allow for fun and leisure time.





MY CLUB AND DEPRESSION: CLUB HANDOUT

Physical Symptoms

- ☹ Sick & run down
- ☹ Difficulty Sleeping
- ☹ Poor Appetite
- ☹ Muscle pains
- ☹ Tired

Thoughts

- ☹ Nothing good ever happens to me
- ☹ There no point in me being here
- ☹ I can't do anything right
- ☹ My future looks bleak
- ☹ I am worthless
- ☹ Its my fault
- ☹ I am a failure

Behaviours

- ☹ Withdrawn from Friends
- ☹ Don't get things done; give up
- ☹ Stop doing things you enjoy
- ☹ Has difficulty concentrating
- ☹ May turn to alcohol or drugs
- ☹ Dangerous behaviour

Feelings

- ☹ Overwhelmed
- ☹ Unhappy
- ☹ Irritable
- ☹ Frustrated
- ☹ Lacking Confidence
- ☹ Indecisive

If you notice any signs and need help:
Helplines NI can help you find the right
service in your community

Helplines Network NI
listen. support. inform

T.A.M.H.I

How coaches/teammates can help?

When you have depression, you may feel ashamed and guilty of the way you are. You may worry about upsetting others especially family, or being told you are making it up or blamed it is your fault by telling them how you feel.

It can also be very hard to put your feelings into words. However, many people in same situation feel sense of relief at being understood once they have talked about it. Letting others know about how you feel is important for getting the right help and support.

OUR CLUB WILL SUPPORT YOU; as a teammate you are part of the Football Family; we will not judge; we will listen; we will do our best to help you through whatever you are going through – we are there and we care.

When should I get more help?

Many people will get better on their own with support and understanding. If the depression is dragging on and causing serious difficulties, it's important to seek treatment. Sometimes when you are feeling low, you may think or try to use drugs or alcohol to forget your feelings. You may see no hope and feel like running away from it all. Doing this only makes the situation worse. When this happens it is important that you let others know and get help.

Remember you are not alone - depression is a common problem and can be overcome. Our Club will support you.

Where can I get help?

- Your teammates/coaches; talk to them if you have any issues. They can support you until you access local services.
- Your GP should be able to support you and get you advise.
- Local mental health groups have walk in support