

Mental Health Carers Service Information & Advice Sheets

Depression

Anyone can get depressed; about 1 in 20 will suffer from severe depression. Men and women suffer depression the same. When people are severely depressed, they feel that life has little offer them and that things will never get better. This low mood is more than being fed up or unhappy; it is persistent and coincides with disturbed sleep, appetite and libido and markedly affects daily functioning. Depression is an illness that can be treated and should not be ignored.

People who are depressed may be pre-occupied with negative thoughts and become socially withdrawn. People can become depressed as a result of external events [e.g. the death of someone close, loss of job, etc]. However, sometimes there is no obvious cause.

Treatment

Anti-depressant medication is a common treatment for depression. This works on chemicals in the brain to lift the mood. It is usually used in conjunction with giving people the opportunity to talk about their feelings and any possible causes of the depression. It can also be useful for people who have depression to meet others who have experienced the illness; so attending a support group might be beneficial. It can help to break down the feelings of isolation and it can help to hear how other people have coped