



# DEPRESSION

## COUNSELLING

Both one-on-one counselling and group counselling can help you understand depression and develop strategies to deal with your symptoms.



## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY



Daily activities that get your heart rate up can help you feel less depressed.

Try using this online activity planner to help get you into a routine:

<https://health.gov/moveyourway/activity-planner>

## MEDICATION

Antidepressants affect the “feel good” molecules in our brains and can help if depression is having a severe effect on the normal tasks in your life (e.g., you cannot go to work or school, you cannot care for yourself or others).



Antidepressants are commonly used along with counselling and may take several weeks to begin to work.

Your dose may need to be changed, and your doctor will talk with you about how long they think you will need to take them.

Antidepressants should be stopped (“tapered”) slowly to avoid symptoms such as:

- Feeling sick, nauseated, or dizzy.
- Other flu-like symptoms.
- Difficulty sleeping or intense, frightening dreams.
- Electric shock sensations (“brain jolts” or “body zaps”).
- Anxiety that may come and go in surges.
- Feeling fidgety and restless.

Your doctor can adjust your tapering plan based on any symptoms that might come up. Counselling can also help manage symptoms of antidepressant withdrawal when stopping medication.

## IMPORTANT TIPS

1. Counselling can also be done through mobile apps, texting, phone, or video services.
2. If antidepressant side effects are mild, they will likely improve over time.

## MEDICATION: PROS & CONS

If your quality of life is severely affected by depression, medication (in combination with counselling) can:

- Improve your mood and day-to-day functioning.
- May help other conditions like anxiety, insomnia, or chronic pain that might accompany depression.

Side effects depend on the medication. When you start, you may experience:

- Weight changes.
- Dry mouth.
- Dizziness.
- Upset stomach.
- Headaches.

## NOTES

