

Experiencing Low Mood

We all feel sad or down from time to time. Problems, disappointments, and losses can affect anyone's mood. These feelings are usually temporary. But when a low mood goes on for more than a few weeks, and other symptoms appear, it could be a sign of depression. Depression is a sadness so severe that it interferes with school, friends and daily activities and prevents you from doing things you usually enjoy.

DEALING WITH LOW MOOD AND DEPRESSION

TIPS

YOUR PLAN

KNOWING IF IT'S MORE THAN LOW MOOD



Only a doctor can diagnose depression. But, if you only feel down for a week or 2, it's likely a low mood. If it persists and you have much less energy than usual, feel like nothing matters and that it will never get better; you may be depressed and need to get help.

It's important to talk to an adult you trust if you notice new and ongoing changes in your mood, thoughts and/or actions. They can help you get the help you need.

Who I'll talk to

BOOST YOUR MOOD BY BEING ACTIVE



Physical activity is great for your mood, stress levels and mental health. It gives you time away from your worries and makes you focus on what you're doing. It improves blood flow, relaxes tense muscles, and fills your body with feel-good chemicals.

Try to get some exercise every day. Even small changes, like getting off the bus a stop or two early and walking the rest of the way, can make a big difference.

My activity plan

RELAX AND DO THINGS YOU ENJOY



It can be hard to relax when you are feeling down. Give yourself permission to spend time doing something fun. It might be reading, watching the sunset, or spending time with friends who can distract you from a bad day – whatever makes you feel happy.

Activities that lower your stress can help you cope with low mood and depression. Try yoga, tai chi, meditation or listening to your favourite music.

How I relax

SLEEP, SCREEN TIME AND OTHER HEALTHY HABITS



Managing stress and sleep both have a big effect on your mood. When you are tired, it's hard to be optimistic or deal with problems. Eating healthy meals and limiting your recreational screen time to 2 hours a day can also help you cope better.

Get into a sleep routine. Go to bed and wake up at the same time every day—including weekends. Having a screen curfew 1 hour before bedtime will improve your sleep.

My sleep routine

GETTING IMMEDIATE HELP



If you're having thoughts of suicide, self-harm or death, you must talk to a trusted adult **right away**. Feeling down or depressed is common, treatable and no one has to go through it alone. People want to help you. **It's always OK to ask for help.**

Get free, confidential, mental health support 24/7 through interpreters (140 languages). Vancouver Coastal Health: 1-866-661-3311 Elsewhere in BC: 310-6789 (no area code).

In case of a crisis