

What is Depression?

Depression is a common illness, which will affect one in five people during their lifetime. It can involve feelings of hopelessness, tiredness, low self-esteem, sleeping problems and physical aches and pains.

The vast majority of people who are depressed will make a full recovery after appropriate treatment. If you think that you may be affected by the condition, then please don't be afraid to get help.

Christmas Stress

With the festive season upon us, most will be out celebrating with friends and families. But the added stresses associated with Christmas can bring about depressive illness. For those affected by depression, Christmas can be the very worst time of the year.

Christmas can be a sad and lonely time for those who live alone, feeling their isolation even more acutely when faced with greater socialising going on around them. It can be a worrying time particularly for those on low incomes and benefits, who may have gone into debt in order to buy presents. Christmas can be a stressful time for employees who are under pressure at work to clear the decks before the holidays, but who are also expected to engage in the usual round of parties and drinks evenings.

Self-help

Although it is important that you talk to your GP if you think you have depression, there are things that you can do to help yourself. Here are some hints on how to deal with depression at Christmas:

Alcohol

It is quite likely that you will have a drink at some time during the festive season. However, whilst one or two drinks once in a while may help you relax and cheer you up, remember that alcohol is a depressant and can exacerbate the symptoms of depression.

Don't be afraid to talk

You may be feeling sad and tired, but you probably still look the same to those around you. Unless you tell them how you feel, they won't understand what is wrong. Those close to you will want to help and a sympathetic, listening ear is an important treatment for depression.

Plan ahead

If you are worried about being alone, find out what is going on in your area. If you feel you will need support, find out if there are any drop-in centres, support groups or other community resources available over Christmas. If you just need somewhere to go, check local newspapers or the Internet to find out what community events are going on. Try to find out about this as early as possible. Also, see whether there is a good day or time to visit friends or relatives.

If, on the other hand, you are worried about being overwhelmed at family events, think ahead about which you want to go to, and which you will be able to make your apologies for.

Useful Organisations

SADA (SAD Association)
01903 814 942
www.sada.org.uk
(recorded information line)

NHS Direct
0845 46 47
www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk
(Open 24 hours)

Saneline
08457 678 000
www.sane.org.uk
(Open 12pm – 2am every day)

Contact Us

I would like to support the work of Depression Alliance.

Please accept my gift of £

I would like Depression Alliance to claim the tax back on this donation, and on any subsequent donation I make.

* For every donation you make to us, we can now claim back the tax paid (equivalent to 28p in every pound), provided you pay an equal amount of income tax or capital gains tax. Please tick the box above if you would like to make your money go even further at no extra cost to you.

I would like to become a member of Depression Alliance and enclose my membership fee of (please tick relevant box):

£10 (full-fee)

£5 (unwaged/OAP/student)

£20 (company rate)

£15 (European rate)

£20 (International rate)

I would like to find out more about Depression Alliance

I would like to pay

By cheque**/postal order for £

By card, please deduct £ from my:

MasterCard

CAF card

VISA card

PLEASE COMPLETE IN BLOCK CAPITALS

Name as written on card

Card No

Exp date

Signature

Date

Title

Forename

Surname

Address

Postcode

E-mail

Please return this form in an envelope to: Depression Alliance, 35, Westminster Bridge Road, London SE1 7JB

Data protection: From time to time, we will write with details about our work. Please tick this box if you would prefer not to hear from us. Your details will never be passed onto to any third party without your prior consent.

* You must pay an amount of income tax (and/or capital gains tax) which is at least equal to the value of what we claim back in that tax year (currently 28p for every pound you give in that tax year). If you pay tax at a higher rate, you can claim further tax relief in your Self Assessment return.

** Please make cheques payable to Depression Alliance

Look After Yourself

If you do get ill, the health service is open over Christmas. Check your local paper, or ask your GP for telephone numbers for GPs working through the holidays. You may also be able to see a psychiatrist at the nearest Accident and Emergency department.

It doesn't last forever!

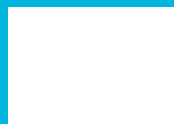
Lastly, remember that the Christmas holidays are only for two weeks. After that, things get back to normal. Remember also, that whilst your depression will last a little longer, it too will pass

Depression Alliance

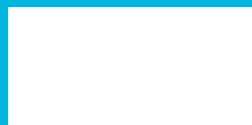
Depression Alliance is the leading UK charity for people affected by depression. We work to relieve this treatable condition by providing information, support and understanding. We also campaign to raise awareness amongst the general public about the realities of depression.

Depression Alliance coordinates a national network of self-help groups so that people with depression can share experiences and coping strategies with others in similar situations.

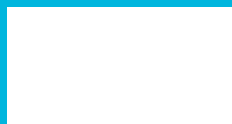
For more information about self-help groups in your area, as well as our other services for people affected by depression, please complete the form overleaf.



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35 Westminster Bridge Road
London
SE1 7JB



Depression Alliance Scotland
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Edinburgh
EH12 5JU

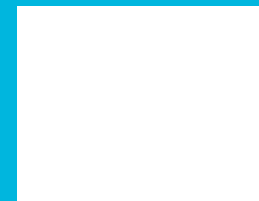


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You can also contact us via our main number 0845 123 23 20. You will automatically be directed to the relevant regional office, and all calls will be charged at the local rate.

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Depression affects one in five of us at some point in our life

It can be especially difficult to cope with depression at Christmas, don't worry – you are not alone.



If you are worried
about a friend or relative
who is depressed,
Depression Alliance
can help.