

If you're feeling depressed, it can be helpful to try some coping strategies.

### **Stay in touch**

Don't withdraw from life. Socialising can improve your mood. Keeping in touch with friends and family also means you have someone to talk to when you feel low.

### **Be more active**

Take up some form of exercise. There's evidence that exercise can help lift your mood. If you haven't exercised for a while, start gently by walking for 20 minutes every day.

### **Set small goals**

Depression can make the simplest tasks seem daunting, so you're going to have to work on breaking things down into small and concrete tasks. For example, instead of getting stuck thinking 'how am I going to get to work/university everyday this week', think about getting to work today, then break it down even further.

1. Get out of bed.
2. Have a shower/shave.
3. Get dressed.
4. Eat breakfast.
5. Head to University/work

### **Face your fears**

Don't avoid the things you find difficult. When people feel low or anxious, they sometimes avoid talking to other people. Some people can lose their confidence about going out, driving or travelling.

If this starts to happen, facing up to these situations will help them become easier.



### **Create a list of coping mechanisms**

Each person is different and will have a difference in preference but here are some common favourites -

Listen to music, go to the gym/for a run, meditate, read, write, draw, visit an art gallery/museum, make a list of things you are grateful for, dance, watch your favourite film/series, go people watching.

### **Don't drink too much alcohol**

For some people, alcohol can become a problem and an unhealthy coping mechanism. You may drink more than usual as a way of coping with or hiding your emotions, or just to fill time. But alcohol won't help you solve your problems and could also make you feel more depressed. Read some tips on cutting down on alcohol.

### **Try to eat a healthy diet**

Some people don't feel like eating when they're depressed and are at risk of becoming underweight. Others find comfort in food and can put on excess weight.

Antidepressants can also affect your appetite.

If you're concerned about weight loss, weight gain or how antidepressants are affecting your appetite, talk to your GP. See tips on how to eat more healthily.

### **Have a routine**

When people feel down, they can get into poor sleep patterns, staying up late and sleeping during the day. Try to get up at your normal time and stick to your routine as much as possible.

Not having a routine can affect your eating. Try to carry on cooking and eating regular meals.

