



## Low Mood During COVID-19

### What is low mood?

Everyone feels sad or low at times. Although this is common after particularly distressing events, sometimes there is no obvious reason why we are feeling down. Low mood often improves after a few days or weeks. However, if you feel like this for a longer period of time, it can be helpful to talk to your GP to find out what options are available to you for support. If you start to have thoughts around suicide or self-harm, it is important to tell someone. Please know that support is available, even if services seem busy at the moment. You can contact the Samaritans or NHS 111. If you are worried that you cannot keep yourself safe, seek **urgent support** straight away by calling the emergency services on 999, your local mental health Crisis Team, or go to your nearest A&E department.

### Symptoms can include:

Symptoms of low mood vary from person to person. You may experience one or several of the following:

- Feeling sad a lot of the time
- Crying more than usual
- Feeling anxious / low self-esteem
- Tiredness / poor sleep
- Feeling irritable / frustrated / angry
- Lack of interest in activities that you used to enjoy
- Low motivation
- Low sex drive
- Change in appetite
- Lack of attention to your appearance

**Lack of routine:** The pandemic has changed our typical daily lives, and some people may have struggled to maintain a sense of routine. This can lead to adopting unhealthy habits as ways of coping in the short-term, such as consuming more alcohol or maybe using drugs. Some people's diets, physical activity levels or sleeping patterns may also have changed. All of these things can contribute to lower mood.

### How does COVID-19 lead to low mood?

**Isolation:** Isolation may have stopped some people from being able to do the usual activities that they enjoy. Some are likely to have missed out on important life events, whereas others may have lacked close contact with friends, family, and colleagues. Feeling cut-off from our normal lives can cause us to feel lonely which can contribute to low mood.

**Loss:** During the pandemic, people may have experienced loss in some way. This could have been loss of a loved one, a relationship or a job. Experiencing loss is a major life-event and can be difficult to deal with. It is not uncommon to feel down or upset afterwards and it can take time to get back to feeling 'normal'.

**Uncertainty:** The uncertainty of the pandemic may have caused some people to feel worried about how COVID-19 could affect them and their loved ones. This is understandable, however excessive worrying can be unhelpful, and can lead to us feeling anxious or distressed.

