

BEAT THE BLUES



A PRACTICAL
GUIDE TO
COPING WITH
**LOW
MOOD**

Includes advice and tips from Dr Rosemary Leonard MBE.



What is the difference between

Low Mood & Depression?

Although everyone suffers from low mood from time to time, when these feelings are experienced on a regular daily basis you may be depressed. Feeling sad or fed up is a normal reaction to experiences that are upsetting, stressful or difficult; those feelings will usually pass.

A low mood can turn into depression when it becomes frequent, persistent and begins to seriously affect your work and your relationships. If this sounds familiar or if you find yourself frequently bursting into tears, losing your appetite or suffering from disrupted sleep, then you could be suffering from depression and should see your GP.

Did You Know?

New Government statistics show the biggest rise in antidepressant prescriptions ever, with a record 39.1 million issued in 2009, up 9% compared to the previous year.¹

Did You Know?

An overwhelming 55% of people cite money worries as the main reason for feeling down in the dumps.²

1. Data from the annual Prescription Cost Analysis. Latest data available from 2008-2009, released April 2010 http://www.ic.nhs.uk/webfiles/publications/prescostanalysis2009/PCA_2009.pdf

2. OnePoll online survey with 3,000 adult respondents between 25 July and 6 August 2008 on behalf of Karma®, a registered medicine to relieve the symptoms of slightly low mood and mild anxiety

3. Populus interviewed 2,050 adults aged 18+, in England and Wales, in work between 18 and 21 March 2010 on behalf of Mind <http://www.populus.co.uk/mind-workplace-health-and-stress-survey-march-2010-210310.html>

How to tell whether you have Low Mood or Depression...

Here is a list of the most common symptoms of low mood and depression. As a general rule, if you have experienced **four or more of these symptoms, for most of the day nearly every day, for over two weeks, then you may be depressed and should seek help from your GP.**

- Tiredness and loss of energy
- Persistent sadness
- Loss of self-confidence and self-esteem
- Difficulty concentrating
- Not being able to enjoy things that are usually pleasurable or interesting
- Undue feelings of guilt or worthlessness
- Feelings of helplessness and hopelessness
- Physical aches and pains
- Loss of appetite
- Sleeping problems - difficulties in getting off to sleep or waking up much earlier than usual
- Avoiding other people, sometimes even your close friends
- Finding it hard to function at work/college
- Loss of sex drive and/or sexual problems
- Thinking about suicide and death*
- Self-harm*

*If you are experiencing either of these two symptoms you should visit your GP as soon as possible.

If you think you are simply suffering from low mood, then read on. This guide will give you helpful tips and advice on how to **brighten up your mood...naturally.**

Source: Depression Alliance UK <http://www.depressionalliance.org/help-and-information/what-is-depression.php>

The recession is taking its toll on UK workers' wellbeing

A recent survey on behalf of Mind, the leading mental health charity for England and Wales, suggests there is compelling new evidence that the current economic recession is having a devastating effect on the wellbeing of British workers. The charity found that since the recession one in ten workers has sought support from their doctor for a variety of mental health problems directly caused by the pressures of recession on their workplace.³



Did You Know?

People feel at their 'lowest' at 3 o'clock in the afternoon.²

Why do some people feel "low"?

In a recent consumer survey almost 70% of people admitted that they sometimes feel down or unhappy, without knowing why.³

Although not as serious as depression, low mood can still affect your daily activities and stop you from living life to the full. Modern life and everyday ups and downs can often take their toll, but fortunately there are a few lifestyle changes and tips you can incorporate into your daily routine to help lift your mood.



Dr Rosemary Leonard offers
Ten Top Tips
 for avoiding and dealing with
LOW MOOD

Dr Rosemary Leonard MBE is a South London GP and resident GP to BBC Breakfast news, Woman and Home Magazine and The Daily Express. Dr Rosemary was awarded an MBE for Services to Healthcare in 2004.
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1 Exercise more: Regular exercise releases “feel-good” endorphins – nature’s instant mood lifters.

2 Get a daily dose of sunlight: Natural sunlight can help to synchronise our

body rhythms (sleeping, eating, sex drive), through stimulating or suppressing hormones. Without enough natural light, hormones can become unbalanced and cause mood disturbances such as low feelings and depression.



3 De-stress: Work-related stress is the main reason people see their GP about low mood.⁴ Try saying “No” to unreasonable demands as this should help reduce the pressure you are under.

4 Simplify your life: Keep clutter to a minimum as it can make you feel even worse. Have a good tidy up and a clear out. Anything that makes you feel more organised and in control will make you happier.



5 Rest easy: Ensure that you get enough rest. Why not treat yourself to some early nights, make sure your bedroom is at a comfortable temperature, and don’t eat large meals after 8pm.

6 Make time for yourself: Make time for the things that you enjoy doing – if life is all about work, responsibilities and doing things for others, then you will soon succumb to low mood. Learn to say no to others, and put your own needs and interests first.

7 Reach out: Let others know how you feel, and talk to them about your feelings and symptoms. Chances are that you are not alone!

8 Avoid alcohol as a crutch: You may feel it helps you relax, but alcohol is a depressant, and will actually make your symptoms worse.

9 Dealing with food cravings: Eat a well-balanced diet to keep you feeling better and to strengthen your immune system. Often when we are down we crave comfort foods such as the simple carbohydrates (e.g. cakes and biscuits). This sugar rush gives us a burst of energy, but is followed by a longer low where we feel more tired.

10 Try a natural alternative: If you choose a natural remedy such as St John’s Wort, which is traditionally used for slightly low mood and mild anxiety, make sure you choose a product that is licensed as a medicine and has an in-pack leaflet containing use and safety information.

⁴ Omnibus online survey with 201 GPs between 8 and 12 April 2010 on behalf of Karma®, a registered medicine to relieve the symptoms of slightly low mood and mild anxiety.

Q&A*

with Dr Rosemary Leonard

Q I am 33 and lately have started to feel down. Work is very stressful at the moment with redundancies almost every month. This is putting more pressure on those, like me, who are still “hanging on”. Unfortunately I bring this burden home with me and it’s beginning to affect my relationship with my partner and young son. Please help.

A Rather ironically, the more stressed you feel, the less well you are likely to perform at work. Don’t try and do too many things at once, finish one task before you start another, and delegate where you can. It’s also important you take a proper lunch break, rather than eating whilst working at your desk. If possible, get outside, so you have a real breather away from the work environment. Try and leave work behind when you come home, and do some exercise together as a family – which will be good for all of you, and help to release your pent-up emotions. If symptoms persist, then I suggest you see your GP. Professional counselling won’t remove the stress, but can teach you strategies to deal with it, which will make life easier for both you and your family.



Q I am a 62 year old widow and have been feeling “down in the dumps” since my only daughter left home to go to University three months ago. One of my friends read something about a herb called St John’s Wort that may help improve my mood. Should I give it a try?

A St John’s Wort has been traditionally used to relieve the symptoms associated with slightly low mood and mild anxiety. If you choose a natural remedy such as St John’s Wort, it is important that you choose one that is licensed, where the quality is assured. Licensed herbal medicines will also contain an information leaflet, so you can check whether it is suitable for you, or likely to interact with any medicine you are taking. However, pills alone are unlikely to solve your problem, and you clearly need to spend less time in your very empty house, and more time socialising with other people. Have you thought about going to an evening class or a sports club, or a local society that interests you? Or maybe doing some voluntary work? Though it can be daunting going out on your own, if you explain your circumstances you will be amazed how friendly other people can be. If symptoms persist you should talk to your GP.

*These are fictitious case studies. If you have similar symptoms you should always seek advice from your own doctor in the first instance.

A quarter of GPs are now more likely to consider recommending St John's Wort thanks to new regulations⁴

A recent survey among over 200 GPs suggests that due to the current legislation of herbal medicines becoming licensed, they are now more likely to consider recommending St John's Wort to patients coming to them with symptoms of low mood as a first course of treatment.

Did You Know?

Currently work-related stress is the main driver of people seeing their GP with low mood; six times more than relationship problems and seven times more than financial worries.⁴

Other survey findings include:

- Over half of GPs (54%) have 8 or more patients a week coming to them with symptoms of low mood
- Over 97% of GPs say that they have experienced patients who are reluctant to take prescribed antidepressants
- Tiredness and lack of energy is the most prevalent symptom associated with low mood (87%), closely followed by stress (74%) and insomnia (72%)
- Seven out of ten patients say that they have been experiencing these symptoms for over a month before seeing their doctor
- Work-related stress is by far the patients' biggest concern when seeing the doctor about low mood (67%)
- Low mood affects the 30-39 year olds the most (42%)

4. Omnibus online survey with 201 GPs between 8 and 12 April 2010 on behalf of Karma®, a registered medicine to relieve the symptoms of slightly low mood and mild anxiety.

What is a registered herbal medicine?

When a herbal medicine is registered under the Traditional Herbal Registration Scheme, it means it has undergone an approval process by the Government's regulatory body - the MHRA (Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency). Registration under this scheme means that:

- Herbal medicines are regulated and meet specific standards of safety and quality based on traditional usage
- Products are of pharmaceutical quality and are manufactured to European Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) Guidelines

All herbal medicines registered under this scheme have a nine digit registration number on their packaging starting with the letters THR



Testimonial

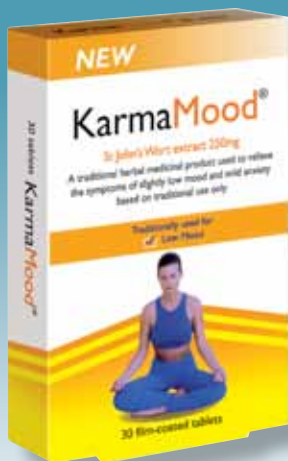
Nicole, 31 from Brighton is a full-time mother of two and tends to feel low during the winter months. She says:

"Every winter as soon as the nights start drawing in I tend to feel down from time to time. I think it was because I grew up in Italy and Spain where the hours of sunshine are much greater. As the clocks went back I waited for the bouts of low mood to begin, I even thought about moving back to Spain simply to get some more sunshine and avoid the winter grey days. After talking to a friend and deciding moving was a little extreme, I decided to see if anything else could help and began to try a product called Karma®. After taking it for a few weeks I believe my mood definitely lifted. I find it much easier to get through the winter months now and am no longer even considering a permanent move back to Spain for the sunshine!"

This is Nicole's personal experience; the benefits of this product have not been scientifically proven.



Lift your mood... naturally!



Karma®.
The first registered
herbal medicine for
Slightly Low Mood

NORMAL STRENGTH
250mg

HIGH STRENGTH
425mg

Karma® is a registered St. John's Wort medicine used to relieve the symptoms of slightly low mood and mild anxiety based on traditional use only. Karma® also contains the highest strength of St John's Wort extract (425mg per tablet). It is available at major pharmacies nationwide and retails at £14.99 for one month's supply (30 one-a-day tablets).

NEW KarmaMood® contains 250mg St John's Wort extract per tablet and retails at £9.99 for one month's supply (30 one-a-day tablets).

Karma® - Let The Sun Shine In!

For more information on Karma® and KarmaMood® go to www.karmamood.co.uk or call **01628 401980** (normal office hours) or Lo-call **0844 443 2006** (evenings and weekends)



Karma® and KarmaMood® are traditional herbal medicinal products used to relieve the symptoms of slightly low mood and mild anxiety, exclusively based upon long-standing use as traditional remedies. Always read the label.