

DEPRESSION

Around one in five people experiences depression at some point in their lives.



Studying in another country is a great opportunity, but it can also be lonely and challenging without family and close friends nearby. You might also feel stressed from your studies. Both these and many other factors can make you more likely to develop depression.

Everyone gets sad now and then, but if your mood is extremely sad, lasts for more than two weeks and impacts on your ability to study or work, you may be suffering from depression.

Some common signs of depression include:

- Less energy than usual
- Can't concentrate, forgetful
- Difficulty sleeping
- Weight gain or weight loss
- Changes in eating habits
- Mood swings
- Feeling anxious, irritable or angry most of the time
- Feeling unmotivated, nothing seems worthwhile
- Physical pain
- Not enjoying the things that usually make you happy such as hobbies or other activities
- Feeling hopeless
- Thinking about death or suicide
- Low self esteem
- Difficulty controlling your emotions.



Did you know that regular exercise can help improve your mood? Aim for 30 minutes every day of any exercise you enjoy that keeps your heart pumping at least a little faster than normal.

Talking to someone about how you feel may also help.

If that sounds like you, you should see a doctor or counsellor as soon as you can. Depression is a serious illness but it is treatable and you can get back to your happy, healthy self with help.

What not to do

People will do all kinds of things to avoid depression. Sometimes an alcoholic drink might seem like a good idea, but because alcohol is a 'depressant' it can actually make things worse. Similarly, party drugs might also make you feel good for a short time, but often you end up even lower than when you started.

Getting help

Professional emergency counselling and support services are available over the phone through ahm OSHC to help you with your depression.

Most universities and colleges have counselling services, as well as overseas student offices, that are available to help students.

It's important to find a doctor who you're comfortable with so that they can help fully assess your depression and any anxiety issues. Sometimes, depending on your situation, you may also need medication.

Stress and trauma counselling helpline - 1800 006 745

ahm OSHC's emergency helpline is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. You will be connected to a qualified counsellor for an initial discussion over the phone. The counsellor will help you develop strategies to move forward and may suggest you arrange an appointment with a qualified professional in person for further assistance.

Visit these websites for more information about depression:

beyondblue.org.au ■ moodgym.anu.edu.au ■ blackdoginstitute.org.au



All Enquiries: 134 246

ahm OSHC, Locked Bag 1006, Matraville NSW 2036

Email oshc@ahm.com.au Web ahmoshc.com

Fax 1300 329 246

Emergency Service Helpline: 1800 006 745

Over-the-phone help for emergency medical assistance, stress and trauma counselling, plus interpreter service. Available 24 hours, 7 days a week.