

Coping with depression at work

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Depression is a mood disorder that causes a persistent feeling of sadness and loss of interest. It affects how you feel, think, and behave, and can lead to various emotional and physical problems. You may have trouble doing normal day-to-day activities and sometimes feel like life isn't worth living.



What are the symptoms of depression?

Symptoms of depression may include:

- Feelings of sadness, tearfulness, emptiness, or hopelessness.
- Angry outbursts, irritability, or frustration, even over small matters.
- Loss of interest or pleasure in most or all normal activities, such as sex, hobbies, or sports.
- Sleep disturbances, including insomnia or sleeping too much.
- Tiredness and lack of energy, so even small tasks take extra effort.
- Reduced appetite and weight loss or increased cravings for food and weight gain.
- Anxiety, agitation, or restlessness.
- Slowed thinking, speaking, or body movements.
- Feelings of worthlessness or guilt, fixating on past failures or self-blame.
- Trouble thinking, concentrating, making decisions, and remembering things.
- Frequent or recurrent thoughts of death and suicidal thoughts.
- Unexplained physical problems, such as back pain or headaches.

How can you cope at work after being diagnosed with depression?

The best way to cope with depression at work is to let your employer and co-workers know what you are going through. This way, they can offer support and work with you to find the best action plan. Tips for dealing with depression at work include:

- If possible, request a flexible schedule.
- Break up big tasks into smaller parts to improve your concentration and focus.
- Create a comfortable workspace. Personalise your work area to put you in a good mood.

- Taking a lunch break and getting outdoors.
- Going for a quick walk during a break, even indoors; exercise does wonders for mental health.
- Practicing a few minutes of mindfulness meditation.
- Incorporate deep breathing exercises into your day.
- Get help. Ask your employer if any mental health resources are available to you in addition to making the minor adjustments already mentioned.

Without treatment, depression can affect your work performance. Employees with depression may be present at work but are not focused or engaged and may miss several days of work. If you are experiencing any symptoms of depression, [book an appointment](#) with an Intercare healthcare professional.

When to get emergency help?

Call your local emergency number immediately if you think you may hurt yourself or attempt suicide. Consider these options if you're having suicidal thoughts:

- [Call an Intercare doctor](#) or mental health professional.
- Call a suicide hotline number — 0800 567 567
- Reach out to a close friend or loved one.

There are plenty of options for treating depression, all of which can improve your symptoms and minimise the impact of depression on your daily life.

Read more: [How to manage anxiety](#)

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