



When people become depressed, they often have no energy or motivation. As a result, they become less active. Doing regular, physical exercise helps to relieve mental and muscular tension. Physical exercise, such as walking, swimming, dancing, playing golf or going to the gym, is helpful.

PLANNING ACTIVITIES

It's a good idea to have a plan to make sure you get around to doing the activities that make you feel better, physically and mentally. If you stick to the plan, not only will you continue to do the things you enjoy, but you'll have a sense of achievement. There's also the added benefit of maintaining social contact with people.

Think about your activities over the past two weeks. Have you:

- Avoided the tasks that give you a sense of achievement?
- Avoided friends and family?
- Done fewer things that you normally enjoy doing?
- Stopped regular exercise?

If you answered YES to one or more of these questions, the information in this fact sheet may help you become more active.

INCREASE DAILY ACTIVITIES

People with severe depression may have difficulty with even simple things, such as getting up and getting dressed in the morning. Generally, the less you do, the worse you feel. Therefore, it's important to increase your activity level by planning simple daily activities such as shopping, driving, gardening, writing letters or completing simple domestic tasks. When you don't feel like doing much, plan to do things with other people. Joining in activities with others will improve your motivation. Here's a way to start planning your activities.

1. Create a schedule that lists the activities you plan to do each day.
2. Start by writing in your regular activities, like showering, eating breakfast and lunch. Then try to fill in the gaps.
3. Include at least one activity you enjoy each day and one activity that will give you a sense of achievement.
4. Schedule some physical activity for each morning and/or late afternoon.
5. Don't get upset if you can't stick to your plan, but try to stick to it as closely as possible. If an activity runs overtime or cannot be completed, skip it and move onto the next one at the appointed time.

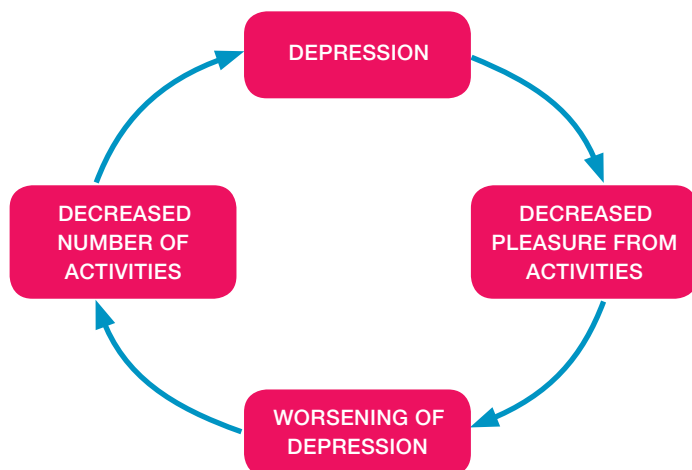
INCREASE ACTIVITIES YOU ENJOY

- People with depression lose interest and pleasure in things they once enjoyed. You may even find that you've stopped some of these activities. This loss of pleasure and enjoyment in life then makes you feel worse.
- Plan activities you'd find enjoyable, interesting, relaxing or satisfying. For example, reading, listening to music, watching movies, gardening, going to the beach or park, taking part in sporting or creative activities, shopping, seeing friends or playing with pets.
- These activities are important in overcoming your depression. At first you may not find them as enjoyable as before but, if you persist, the pleasure will eventually return.

Keeping active

FACT SHEET 8

The depression cycle



INCREASE SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

- People with depression often withdraw from their family and close friends.
- As a result, they usually have less opportunity to feel connected. A cycle of increasing social isolation then develops.
- It's very important to continue to participate in activities with family and close friends and to accept social invitations, even though you may not feel like it.
- People who are more socially isolated have an increased risk of developing depression and take longer to recover.

TIPS TO SUCCESSFULLY PLAN ACTIVITIES

- The cycle of depression can be broken by doing things you enjoy.
- Create your schedule in the evening for the following day's activities, so you'll have a plan from the moment you open your eyes.
- If necessary, ask someone to help you create your activity plan.
- If you have difficulty getting out of bed in the morning, make plans to meet someone mid-morning. This makes you get up and get moving.
- Include exercise in your activity plan. Physical exercise can help reduce depression.

MORE INFORMATION

beyondblue Fact sheet 6: Reducing stress

beyondblue Fact sheet 7: Sleeping well

beyondblue Fact sheet 9: Reducing alcohol and other drugs

beyondblue Fact sheet 10: Changing your thinking

beyondblue Fact sheet 11: Antidepressant medication

beyondblue Fact sheet 14: What other treatments are available for depression and anxiety?



A LIST OF ENJOYABLE ACTIVITIES

Keeping fit

- | | | | |
|---|--|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Go for a 20 minute walk | <input type="radio"/> Surf | <input type="radio"/> Walk the dog | <input type="radio"/> Play golf |
| <input type="radio"/> Ride a bike | <input type="radio"/> Bushwalk | <input type="radio"/> Go to the gym | <input type="radio"/> Play netball |
| <input type="radio"/> Join an aerobics class | <input type="radio"/> Swim at a pool/beach | <input type="radio"/> Kick a ball | <input type="radio"/> Jog |
| <input type="radio"/> Play squash or tennis | | | |

Entertain yourself

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Read the newspaper | <input type="radio"/> Watch TV | <input type="radio"/> Read a book/magazine | <input type="radio"/> Write a letter |
| <input type="radio"/> Surf the internet | <input type="radio"/> Play a solo card game | <input type="radio"/> Do a crossword | |

Socialise

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Invite a friend around for coffee | <input type="radio"/> Organise a video evening | <input type="radio"/> Visit a neighbour |
| <input type="radio"/> Ring a friend for a chat | <input type="radio"/> Take your children to the playground | |

Indulge yourself

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Have a massage | <input type="radio"/> Paint your nails | <input type="radio"/> Go for a hike with your friends |
| <input type="radio"/> Buy some new clothes | <input type="radio"/> Eat some exotic fruit/chocolate | <input type="radio"/> Have a bubble bath |
| <input type="radio"/> Buy some flowers | <input type="radio"/> Lie on the beach and read a book | |

Around the house

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|--------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Cook something new | <input type="radio"/> Listen to a CD/ radio | <input type="radio"/> Watch TV | <input type="radio"/> Knit/Sew |
| <input type="radio"/> Fix something in the house | <input type="radio"/> Handicrafts | <input type="radio"/> Do some gardening | |
| <input type="radio"/> Play with your children or pets | | | |

Away from home

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Go to a market | <input type="radio"/> Visit a museum | <input type="radio"/> Visit an art gallery |
| <input type="radio"/> Visit a friend or family member | <input type="radio"/> Visit the library | <input type="radio"/> Check out the local neighbourhood |
| <input type="radio"/> Take your children to a park | <input type="radio"/> Go to a movie | <input type="radio"/> Stroll through the shopping centre |

Plan ahead

- | | | | |
|---|--|--|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Organise a dinner party | <input type="radio"/> Plan a BBQ | <input type="radio"/> Plan a weekend away | <input type="radio"/> Join a club |
| <input type="radio"/> Buy theatre or sporting tickets | <input type="radio"/> Do some Christmas shopping | <input type="radio"/> Invite some friends to see a movie | |



WORKSHEET FOR PLANNING ACTIVITIES AND MANAGING YOUR SLEEP-WAKE CYCLE

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
MORNING							
7am							
8am							
9am							
10am							
11am							
12noon							
AFTERNOON							
1pm							
2pm							
3pm							
4pm							
5pm							
6pm							
EVENING							
7pm							
8pm							
9pm							
10pm							
Time of going to bed							
Number of hours asleep							
Rate your sleep quality on a scale of 0-5 (0=bad, 5=excellent)							
Rate your mood today on a scale of 0-5 (0=bad, 5=excellent)							
Rate how tired you are today on a scale of 0-5 (0=very tired, 5=energetic)							

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