

ULTRA ACCESS

Mental Health Alert: Depression

The "Gateway" Mental Health Condition...

Depression is far more than prolonged sadness; it is a serious, often chronic mental condition that affects over 280 million people worldwide (according to the WHO, 2023).
... these numbers are conservative, in the opinion of **ULTRA ACCESS**.

When untreated or inadequately managed, it frequently becomes a gateway to more severe and potentially life-threatening conditions.
Persistent low mood erodes resilience, distorts thinking patterns, and depletes the psychological resources needed to cope with stress, creating fertile ground for escalation.

Long-term depression significantly increases the risk of developing anxiety disorders, obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and substance-use disorders... as well as the strongest single risk factor for suicide.

Chronic depression also raises vulnerability to psychotic depression, bipolar disorder misdiagnosis or emergence, and treatment-resistant depression, all of which carry heightened suicide risk and require intensive intervention.

The physiological toll is equally grave, with depression playing a part in serious physical health issues and the overall decline in ones physical wellbeing.

However...

Depression can be highly responsive to lifestyle and behavioural interventions that can halt or even reverse its progression, and thankfully so.

Adequate sleep (7–9 hours nightly) is among the most powerful antidotes: sleep deprivation increases ones mental negativity, while consistent restorative sleep enhances emotional regulation.

Reducing or eliminating alcohol is equally critical - alcohol is a central-nervous-system depressant that disrupts REM sleep, lowers serotonin, and intensifies hopelessness the following day.

Depression can also be relived by regular and moderate exercise - around 30 minutes most days boosts endorphins, delivering antidepressant effects comparable to medication for mild-to-moderate cases.

Sunlight exposure, and just being outdoors in nature helps produce natural vitamin D and can give a feel-good factor, further alleviating the symptoms.

Persistent low moods in oneself and ones colleagues is a clear indication of depressive feelings, and especially important in managing when carrying out the high-risk and high-stress works that scaffolders regularly do, they can quickly spiral out of control, leading to dark thoughts of self harm, and even suicide.

Take care of your mental health and look out for each other, we need to have our wits about us and be focused on the task at hand when plying our safety-critical trade.

