

## Depression Alliance

[www.depressionalliance.org](http://www.depressionalliance.org)

Depression Alliance has set up 'Friends in Need' as a way for people affected by depression, or supporting someone with depression to talk online, and meet up with groups in their local area. It is free to join and a great way to share support.

## Together UK

[www.together-uk.org](http://www.together-uk.org) - Tel 020 7780 7300

Together is a national charity working alongside people with mental health issues on their journey towards independent and fulfilling lives. Together offer a fantastic 'Find Support Near You' function on their website which allows you to discover a wide range of services available in your area.

## YoungMinds

[www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk) - Tel 020 7089 505

YoungMinds is the UK's leading charity committed to improving the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people.

Young people looking for support text YM to **85258**

Worried parents helpline **0808 802 5544**

## SANE

[www.sane.org.uk](http://www.sane.org.uk) - Helpline 0300 304 7000

(4pm - 10.30pm 365 days a year)

SANE is a leading UK mental health charity working to improve quality of life for anyone affected by mental illness.

## Calm

[www.thecalmzone.net](http://www.thecalmzone.net) - Tel 0800 58 58 58

(Nationwide) 0808 802 5858 (London)

(5pm - midnight 365 days a year)

Campaign Against Living Miserably. A support group for men of any age, who are down or in crisis in the UK,

*"Being silent isn't being strong".*

## Samaritans

[www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org) - Tel 116 123

"Always someone to help".

**If you feel like harming or hurting yourself or other people:**

- Call 999
- Go to your nearest Accident and Emergency (A&E)

***LUPUS UK is the national registered charity caring for people with lupus and has over 5,000 members who are supported by the Regional Groups.***

*Please contact National Office should you require further information about lupus and/or details of membership.*

*LUPUS UK is certified under the requirements of the Information Standard.*



# LUPUS UK



St James House, Eastern Road, Romford,  
Essex RM1 3NH

Tel: 01708 731251

[www.lupusuk.org.uk](http://www.lupusuk.org.uk)

Reg. Charity nos. 1051610, SC039682

# LUPUS and Depression



Services and  
support  
available for you



**This leaflet provides information about manifestations of depression and anxiety in lupus and signposts the support services available.**

Depression and anxiety can be common in people with lupus. It is often difficult to determine whether these might be an integral part of lupus (as it is in some patients) where management of the lupus itself often lifts the depression/anxiety, whether it has arisen in response to having a chronic painful illness, or whether it is an unrelated psychological condition.

Lupus can affect any organs of the body, including the brain. In people who have brain involvement from their lupus, depression, anxiety and brain fog (cognitive dysfunction) are some of the most common symptoms. It is not currently understood exactly how the neuropsychiatric involvement of lupus can lead to depression and anxiety, but it is likely due to a complex combination of biochemical abnormalities that affect different parts of the brain. A lupus flare can also trigger clinical depression and anxiety, both because you feel ill, and because it may seem as though you are never going to be free of lupus.



The management of these psychological conditions in lupus rests on a combination of treating the underlying symptoms, as well as possibly adding in antidepressant therapy. In severe depression, especially if there are other symptoms like anxiety or hallucinations, the help of a special therapist is essential. One of the medical advances in the last decade has been the introduction of newer, milder antidepressants with less of the severe side-effects which hampered older treatments.

It is possible that some treatments for lupus such as prednisolone (steroids) could trigger or exacerbate depression and/or anxiety. Steroids can have a significant effect on mood and temperament in some people. Even those people not predisposed to depression or anxiety may feel very nervous on the medicine, cry for no apparent reason, and get angry with others very easily. You may find it helpful to inform your loved ones early on that these are potential side effects if you are taking steroids. This is important because you may not notice this problem yourself at all. They may help to point it out to you at an early stage

so that you can discuss the problem sooner rather than later with your doctor.

If feelings of depression or anxiety are caused by or exacerbated by steroid treatment, it may help to lower the dose. This should always be done under the direct supervision of your doctor to prevent a flare in your lupus and potential severe withdrawal problems that can occur when steroid doses are decreased too quickly. In situations where you may be unable to currently decrease your steroid dose, sometimes a mood-stabiliser or antidepressant may help.

Mental health is very complex and it is important to seek help from your GP if you are struggling with depression and/or anxiety. Many people wait a long time before seeking help, but it is best not to delay. The sooner you see a doctor, the sooner you can be on the way to recovery. Your psychological wellbeing is an important part of your overall health. Keep your doctor informed about how you are feeling; good health is mental and emotional as well as physical.

Here are some of the services and support available:-

### **Counselling and Psychological Therapies**

Psychological therapies are widely available on the NHS through the programme 'Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT)'.



IAPT services offer a range of psychological therapies, including individual and group-based therapy. If you are referred for counselling or another psychological therapy through the

NHS, it will be free of charge. However, your choice of the type of therapy may be limited. If you have a preference for the type of therapy you receive, or the time or location of your appointments, you may choose to look for a private therapist. You can find NHS IAPT services available in your area by going to - [www.nhs.uk/Service-Search/Counselling-NHS-\(IAPT\)services/LocationSearch/396](http://www.nhs.uk/Service-Search/Counselling-NHS-(IAPT)services/LocationSearch/396)

**Mind** [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk) - Infoline 0300 123 3393 or text 68463 (9am - 6pm, Mon - Fri)

Mind provides a confidential mental health information service, with support and understanding.

Mind enables people to make informed choices. The infoline gives

information on types of mental distress, where to get help, drug treatments, alternative therapies and advocacy. Mind has a network of local associations providing local services.



Mind also has a Legal Advice Service - [legal@mind.org.uk](mailto:legal@mind.org.uk) or 0300 466 6463 (9am - 6pm, Mon - Fri)

### **NHS Moodzone** [www.nhs.uk/Conditions/stress-anxiety-depression](http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/stress-anxiety-depression)

NHS Choices Live Well 'Moodzone' offers whatever you need to know about boosting your mood, coping with stress,



anxiety or depression, or improving your overall wellbeing. The NHS Choices Moodzone is there to help, offering practical, useful information and interactive tools and videos to support you to feeling better. Moodzone also offers a useful self-assessment quiz.

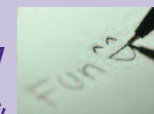
NHS Mental Health Helpline numbers can be found on the Moodzone page [www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression).

### **Big White Wall** [www.bigwhitewall.com](http://www.bigwhitewall.com)

The Big White Wall is an online mental health network where people can anonymously be open about what's on their mind, guided by trained professionals.

Big White Wall is available free in many areas of the UK via the NHS, employers, and universities. It is also free to all UK serving personnel, veterans, and their families.

### **Rethink Mental Illness** [www.rethink.org](http://www.rethink.org) - Tel 0300 5000 927



RETHINK is a mental illness advice line, providing expert advice and information to people experiencing mental health problems, and those who care for them. They also offer help and information to health professionals, employers and staff.

