

**Sexual Problems Assessment and Treatment Service (SPATS)**

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## Low mood and Anxiety

We know that low mood or anxiety can negatively impact on sexual function, sexual confidence and the general quality of our sex-lives. It is recommended to have support for general low mood or anxiety before starting sex therapy. Psychological techniques for overcoming low mood and/or anxiety can be a helpful foundation for sex therapy.

Based on the answers you have given, you have scored within the following ranges:

Low mood	Mild (5-9)	Moderate (10-14)	Moderately-Severe (15-19)	Severe (>20)	(please circle)
Anxiety	Mild (5-9)	Moderate (10-14)	Moderately-Severe (15-19)	Severe (>20)	(please circle)

The National guidelines (NICE) recommend that people scoring within these ranges have an evidence-based talking therapy intervention and a conversation with their GP about medications that might help.

Please see the following links for more information about these guidelines:

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/CG90/IFP/chapter/treatments-for-mild-to-moderate-depression>

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg90/ifp/chapter/Treatments-for-moderate-or-severe-depression>

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/CG113/chapter/1-Guidance#principles-of-care-for-people-with-generalised-anxiety-disorder-gad>

## Services

Given how common low mood and anxiety difficulties are, there is a national NHS scheme called Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) that allows quick, local access to evidence-based talking therapies for everybody. For more information on these local services please see <http://www.iapt.nhs.uk/> or talk to your GP about a referral.

## Self-help

There are a number of self-help strategies that are well evidenced to help with these difficulties. For example, exercise is well-evidenced to improve low mood. We also know that exercise promotes a healthy cardio-vascular system, which is helpful for sexual function as well.

Please click on the link below for a self-help guide to low mood:

<http://www.ntw.nhs.uk/pic/leaflets/Depression%20and%20Low%20Mood%20A4%202015.pdf>

Please click on the link below for a self-help guide to anxiety:  
<http://www.ntw.nhs.uk/pic/leaflets/Anxiety%20A4%202015.pdf>

Your GP and local IAPT service will also be able to recommend other useful resources, for example self-help books such as 'Overcoming Anxiety' and 'Overcoming Depression', which are available on prescription from certain local libraries or can be purchased.

Mindfulness-based cognitive-behaviour therapy (MCBT) has a good evidence base for people experiencing a range of difficulties, including reoccurring depression and chronic pain. It also has a growing amount of evidence as part of the treatment for a number of sexual problems. MCBT is sometimes available via the NHS. Please contact your GP or local IAPT service to enquire about this.

There are also a number of courses run by different organisations, on-line programmes, self-help books and audio guides.

### Crisis Services

If you are feeling in crisis, there are several services who can offer immediate help and support, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. These are:

- Your local A and E - call **999**
- Walk in Your GP - out of hours service usually available
- The Samaritans – Tel **116 123**, email [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org) or walk in (see <http://www.samaritans.org/branches> for details of your local drop in centre)
- Maytree - Tel **020 7263 7070**, email [maytree@maytree.org.uk](mailto:maytree@maytree.org.uk) ([www.maytree.org.uk](http://www.maytree.org.uk))
- SANEline (6pm – 11pm) **0300 304 7000**
- Single Point of Access - **0800 0234 650** (For Camden, Islington, Brent, Harrow, Hillingdon, Kensington & Chelsea and Westminster residents).

Please contact SPATS if you have any questions on **0203 317 5122** or email [psychosexualteamadmin@nhs.net](mailto:psychosexualteamadmin@nhs.net). *However please note that we are not a crisis service and are only open during office hours, therefore there will often be a delay in responding to your message.*