

5 tips for talking to your GP about your mental health

Talking to your GP about your mental health can feel daunting, especially if you're not sure where to start or what to say. Keeping these five tips in mind can help you remember what's important to discuss and get the most from your appointment.

1 PREPARE WHAT YOU WANT TO SAY

Take a moment to organise your thoughts and think about what you'd like to cover during your appointment. Use our GP appointment preparation worksheet or make a few notes about:

- How you've been feeling emotionally, mentally, and physically
- Anything that may have contributed to you feeling that way
- Anything you've already tried that is or isn't working

2 DESCRIBE WHAT'S CHANGED

Try to be as open and specific as you can about the changes you've noticed. This will help your GP understand what's happening and what support may help. Think about:

- Changes in your thoughts, mood, behaviours, or physical health
- How long you've been experiencing these changes
- Whether anything makes them better or worse

3 BE HONEST ABOUT THE IMPACT

Explain how your mental health is affecting your day-to-day life so the Doctor can recommend the right support. It's important to tell them if you've been experiencing thoughts of self-harm or suicide. Consider these:

- Work, study, or daily responsibilities
- Relationships with family, friends, and colleagues
- Self-care and motivation

4 QUESTIONS AND OPTIONS

You have the right to ask questions and be involved in decisions about your care. If there's anything you don't understand or want to clarify, ask your GP to explain. Some questions:

- What treatment options are available?
- Are there local services I can access for support?
- What are the benefits and side effects of the recommended treatment?

5 LEAVE WITH A CLEAR PLAN

Before your appointment ends, make sure you understand what will happen next. It can help to write the plan down. You might want to check:

- Have I been referred for further support or treatment?
- When should I hear back?
- What should I do if my symptoms don't improve or become worse?



mentalhealth-uk.org/talk-to-your-gp