

After the floods

Worried about how you and your family feel?

You're not alone. We're here to help.

We are all individuals and there is no right or wrong way to cope or feel. For most of us, especially if we have never experienced problems with anxiety or low mood before, these psychological effects will gradually disappear over time. Initially just keep an eye on yourself and others and check out how things are going.

Some people will, however, need additional help.

There are things that can help you or your family to recover:

- Do take time to sleep, rest, think, and be with those important to you
- Do try to keep your life as normal as possible
- Do understand that memories and feelings may stay with you for some time to come – this is your mind's way of trying to make sense of it all, to feel in control of it, even if you couldn't control it
- Do say what you need clearly and honestly to family, friends and others
- Do avoid excessive alcohol and drugs. They are often used as a way of coping but they tend to block the feelings that will emerge in the end. Alcohol and drugs often lead to more problems than they solve
- Do let children talk about their emotions and express themselves in games / drawing
- Don't bottle feelings up. Express your emotions and let others share in your worries
- Don't take on too much
- Don't make any major life changes
- Don't avoid talking about what's happened
- Don't let embarrassment stop you from talking with others about what's happened. Talking is an important way of dealing with the situation.

Everyone is unique and will react differently, but typical reactions to such an extreme event can include:

- Shock
- Disbelief
- Stress
- Nervousness, fear or anxiety
- Difficulty sleeping
- Worry
- Low mood
- Irritability
- Anger
- Helplessness

Having difficulty managing your reaction to the floods?

If you feel that your reactions to the floods are difficult to manage, or that you're feeling more low or anxious than you might expect, help is available for you, your family and your loved ones.

Remember, if you are struggling with low mood or some form of anxiety, seeking help is sensible and is not a sign of weakness. Those with children who may have been affected emotionally by the flooding should make contact with their GP in the first instance.

If your GP surgery is closed and you feel you or your child need help before it is next open, then call 111 and speak to a highly trained adviser, supported by healthcare professionals.

They will ask you a series of questions to assess your symptoms and immediately direct you to the best medical care for you. The 111 service is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and from mobile phones.