Feelings of worthlessness

Pessimistic views of the future

Ideas or acts of self-harm or suicide

Disturbed sleep (especially early morning waking, but also initial insomnia, frequent waking and non-restful sleep)

Reduced appetite, sometimes with significant weight loss

Mood may be lower in the morning and improve as the day progresses (diurnal variation)

Slowing of movement and thinking processes (psychomotor retardation, which can progress to a stupor in very severe cases)

In some cases:

- Anxiety and agitation
- Irritability
- Increase of existing phobias, obsessions and hypochondria
- Increased intake of alcohol

In a number of cases, usually when severe:

Delusional ideas, which usually centre around sin, poverty or imminent disaster, for which the sufferer might feel they are personally responsible.

Auditory hallucinations (basically hearing noises or voices others cannot) which are usually in the form of defamatory or accusatory voices.

Olfactory hallucinations (smelling things others cannot), often of rotting filth or decomposing flesh.

Not everyone suffers from depression in exactly the same way, or experiences all the symptoms listed. Some people may even have the illness without actively feeling sad.

Depression can be mild, moderate or severe, depending on the number and severity of symptoms and levels of impairment of day-to-day functioning.

With mild depression, there may be a certain degree of difficulty in coping with day-to-day activities such as work, school, housework and socializing, but the individual does continue to function in these areas.

In moderate depression, there is considerable difficulty in continuing to carry out daily activities.

In severe depression, the sufferer is generally rendered unable to cope with their activities. They are usually extremely distressed or agitated, or they may become exceptionally slowed down in their thinking, movement and general functioning (psychomotor retardation). Self-neglect and neglect of daily chores may occur.

Some people experience what is described as ‘atypical