

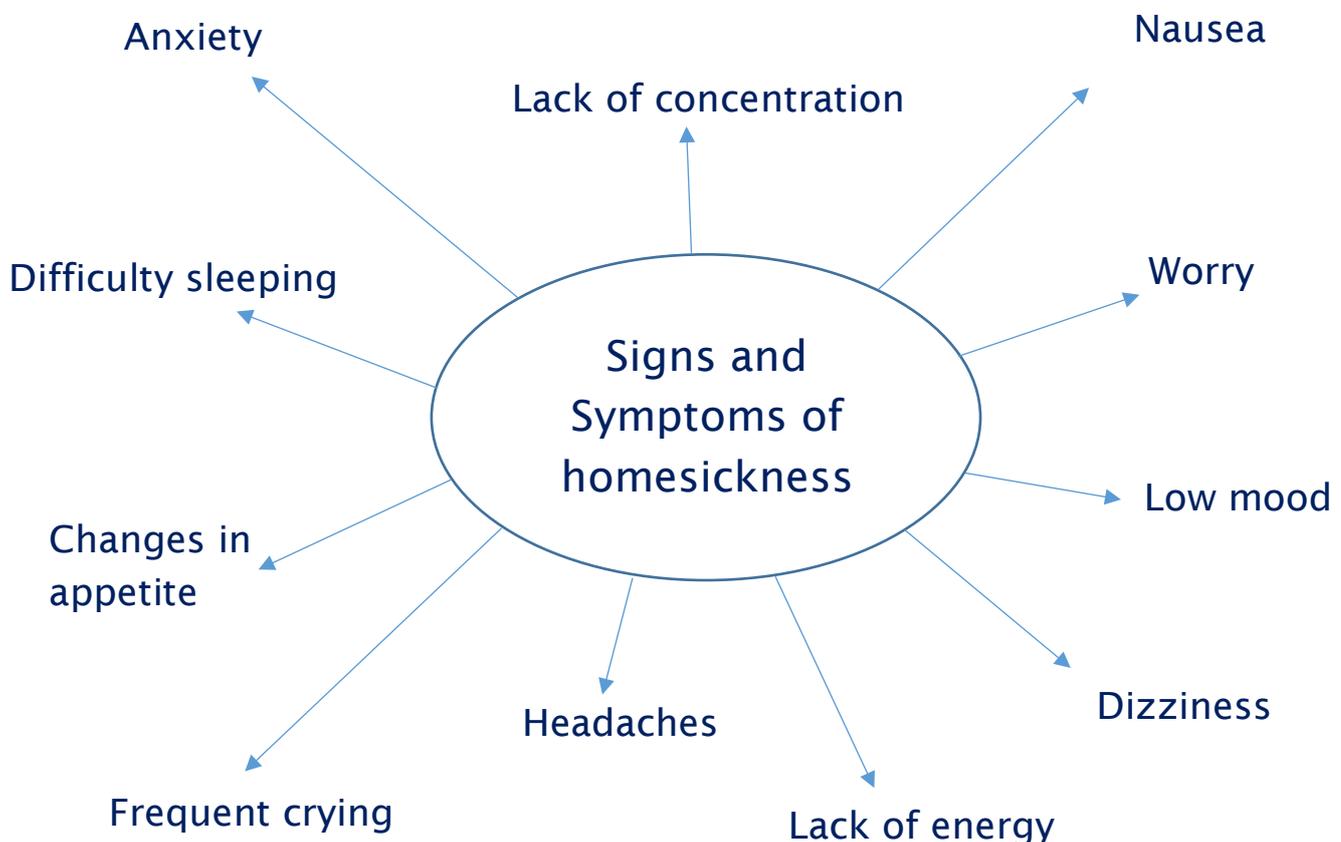
What is Homesickness?

“Experiencing a longing for one’s home during a period of absence from it”
- *Oxford Dictionary*

“It can be as simple as the stress caused from a break in regular routine”
- *BBC*

“...the distress or impairment caused by an actual or anticipated separation from home”
- *Wikipedia*

“Missing people and things you usually have around you. You might feel like a duck out of water.”
- *NHS*



Myths and Facts about Homesickness

Myth: Homesickness lasts around four weeks.

Homesickness can last a few days, weeks, or even months. It depends on the individual and circumstances. Although in most cases the feelings pass or improve within a few weeks, it can sometimes last longer. Just remember – support is available and you are not alone in feeling this way.

True: Talking about homesickness will help.

Talking about feeling homesick will not make it worse. Talking provides an outlet for feelings to be expressed and creates an opportunity to share experiences and learn coping strategies. Talk to someone you trust about how you are feeling, such as a close friend, family member, or contact Enabling Services via email: enable@soton.ac.uk

Myth: As soon as you feel homesick, you should visit home.

Many students feel that they want to go home when they feel homesick and especially at the current time, if you are worried about friends and family. It is even more important to keep in touch with friends and family at the moment so do try to use resources available to you, such as Skype to stay in touch.

True: Most students will feel homesick.

It is important to realise that you are not the only one feeling homesick. Homesickness is a normal part of leaving home or experiencing change. Getting through these difficult feelings will help you develop skills to cope with similar situations in the future.

Myth: Homesickness is only something that young people get.

Homesickness is something that anyone can experience. It's normal for people of any age to experience some anxiety or sadness when they are away from home. The symptoms and feelings can be the same, regardless of age.

True: Homesickness can mean missing places, people, routines, and pets.

Sometimes homesickness is about missing part of the life you left behind – not just people and places. You can be missing anything that you regard as normal, such as routines, food, pets, hobbies and interests.



Coping with Homesickness - Top Tips

Be patient

Everyone takes time to get used to changes to routines. Be kind to yourself and try not to judge yourself harshly if things aren't happening straight away. This is an opportunity to develop your emotional awareness by having space to identify what you are feeling and why. You aren't just learning what's on your course, but learning how to live through unprecedented times.

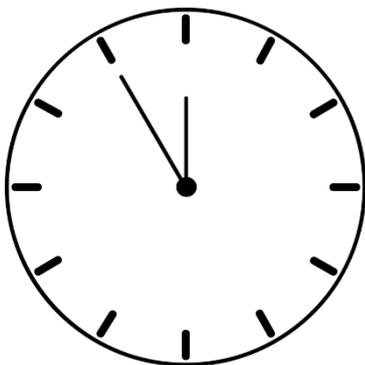


Take care of yourself

Keeping basic healthy habits will make a huge difference: stay active, eat healthily and regularly, and ensure you're getting enough sleep. Exercise releases chemicals into the body that promote feelings of wellbeing, whilst eating well and staying hydrated can significantly boost your mental health. Remember to treat yourself at times too!

Focus on home comforts

Get out any items that remind you of home, such as photos and spend some time looking through these. If you have any favourite recipes that your family make, as them to send you the instructions so that you can try to recreate them yourself.



Take some time for yourself

Setting aside some time to relax can help you reflect on your experiences and better understand how you are feeling. Designate some "me time" to do things that make you happy, such as reading, writing, exercising, watching a movie, painting etc. You could also consider making some time to learn a new skill such as cooking or a foreign language. This is a great way to nurture a positive view of yourself - by focusing on your positive aspects.



Congratulate yourself!

Facing change and the unknown is difficult for anyone, and it is natural to feel anxious and emotional at first. It takes a lot of courage to try new things, especially when you are away from your usual support network and the change has been sudden. You should take pride in your initiative, resourcefulness, and determination!



Who to talk to about Homesickness

Enabling Services

- Enabling Services are still open however our phone lines are not being monitored. If you would like support please email: enable@soton.ac.uk
If you are facing significant difficulties or dealing with a crisis, please email: Firstsupport@soton.ac.uk

Student Life

The Student Life Team are dedicated to supporting student wellbeing and enhancing the student experience. Available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, Student Life support all University of Southampton students. Contact Student Life by emailing them at studentlife@soton.ac.uk

Students' Union

- Advice Centre: the Students' Union Advice Centre aims to provide all students at the University with free, independent, confidential advice and representation in a friendly, relaxed environment. The Advice Centre is currently offering advice by email or telephone. More information can be found here: susu.org

- Nightline: a free confidential listening and information service available to all students. Nightline is run entirely by student volunteers who are available to listen to students throughout the night. Call them on [+44\(0\)23 8059 5236](tel:+44(0)2380595236) or visit <http://southampton.nightline.ac.uk> to use the online chat tool.

Samaritans

Samaritans offer a safe place for you to talk any time you like, in your own way – about whatever's getting to you. They're there round the clock, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Call them for free on [116 123](tel:116123) or email jo@samaritans.org

Shout

Shout is a UK 24/7 text service, free on all major mobile networks, for anyone in crisis, anytime, anywhere. Text: [85258](tel:85258) or visit giveusashout.org for more information.

