

# Depression

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A diagnosis of cancer often triggers feelings of sadness, grief and fears about death. A cancer diagnosis can cause interruption of life plans, changes in lifestyle, social roles, body image and self-esteem.

**Symptoms of depression may include:**

- Depressed mood; feeling blue
- Decreased interest and pleasure
- Appetite loss
- Anxiety or decreased concentration
- Loss of energy
- Feelings of worthlessness
- Guilt
- Difficulty sleeping
- Thoughts of death
- Hopelessness

All people experience sadness and grief at different times throughout diagnosis, treatment, and survival, but these symptoms and fears usually decrease as a person adjusts to their diagnosis. Dealing with the life changes effectively will decrease the likelihood of depression.

**Ways to help with depression include:**

- Daily physical exercise
- Mental exercises (games, crossword puzzles, meditation)
- Talking with friends, family members, clergy, or healthcare providers
- Engaging in enjoyable activities
- Continuing daily activities (work, sports, hobbies)

Patients who exhibit the symptoms of depression should talk to their healthcare provider to discuss options for treatment. Some options for treating depression include counseling and/or medication.