



## Managing Depression

Parkinson's

Depression is common for people living with a chronic progressive condition like Parkinson's disease. The National Parkinson Foundation notes that depression and anxiety are more common for people living with Parkinson's disease than other chronic diseases. Depression can be caused by a variety of factors including chemical changes in the brain, feeling a loss of control over one's body and situation or frustration and anxiety about the future.

### Signs of Depression

- Depressed mood, sadness or irritability
- Change in appetite or sleep
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness or helplessness
- Loss of interest in activities
- Fatigue or loss of energy
- Feeling of worthlessness
- Difficulty concentrating or making decisions
- Feeling agitated or slowed down
- Thoughts that life is not worth living or wanting to end one's own life

The good news is that depression is quite treatable. The most effective intervention includes a combination of antidepressant medication and counseling. In addition, exercise, support and social engagement are important.

## Tips

- Be aware of elements that can increase depression like alcohol and certain medications.
- Get out of your house and out of your head; too much thinking can worsen depression.
- Consider refocusing energy on others like volunteering or lending a hand to a friend or neighbor.
- Spend time with nature, pets and children.
- Move your body! Exercise is critical for physical and emotional well-being.
- Use meditation, spirituality, positive thinking and music to quiet negative thoughts.
- Keep a sense of humor by finding the amusement in everyday situations or create laughter by watching a comedy or reading a funny story.
- Have a plan for the future, so if your condition progresses you will be prepared.
- Join a local support group for practical ideas and emotional help from others experiencing a similar situation.
- Look for additional support from a close friend, family member, social worker, counselor or spiritual leader.
- If you think you may be depressed, ask to be screened and for help from your medical provider.



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