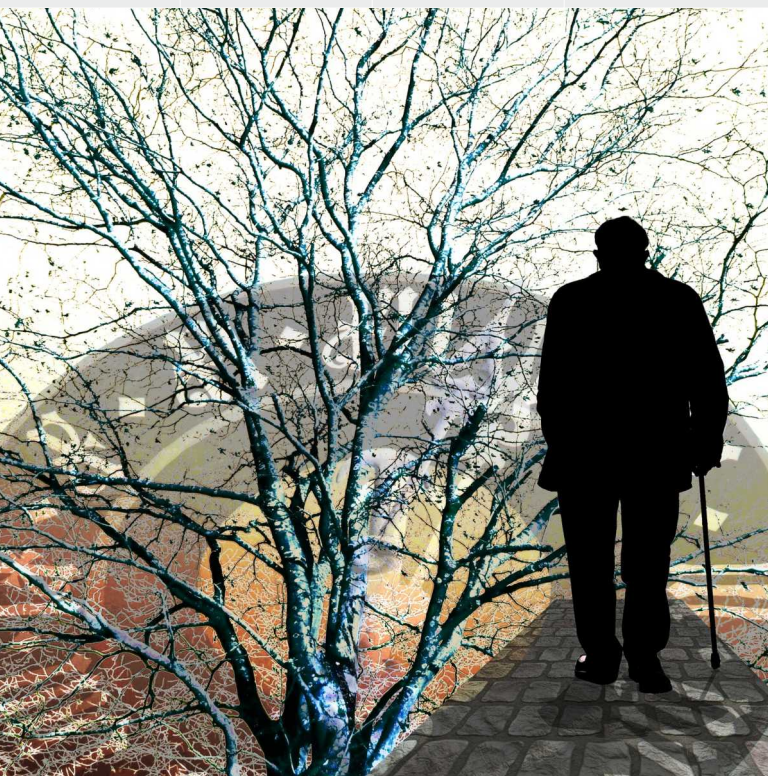


# How to Prevent Depression in the Elderly



**P. D. HINDUJA HOSPITAL  
& MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE**

## **What is elderly depression?**

Depression is a mood disorder in which patients have persistent low mood, which may be a result of negative life events. Depression is caused by changes in concentration of brain neurotransmitters.

## **What are the causes of elderly depression?**

There are a number of causes of elderly depression such as:-

- Painful events - Depression can be triggered by something like the death of a partner or close friend or siblings or loss of health.
- Past depression - A past history of depression can trigger a relapse.
- Physical illnesses - Thyroid disease, cerebral vascular diseases, stroke, Parkinson's disease, cancer, etc. can cause depression, resulting in a loss of dignity, a sense of being a burden on others, etc.
- Social isolation and loneliness - Living alone, a lack of close family ties, inability to participate in the local community, combined with physical disablement and demoralization can lead to depression.

## **What are the symptoms of elderly depression?**

1. Sadness, pessimism, lack of interest, irritability, guilt, feelings of worthlessness, poor concentration, suicidal ideas.
2. Decreased or increased sleep, fatigue, decreased or increased appetite, fluctuations in weight.
3. Memory loss, memory changes.
4. Avoidance of leaving the home, alcohol abuse, preoccupations with changing one's

will, giving away personal possessions may imply depression.

### **How is depression treated?**

Antidepressant medication and psychotherapy help to treat depression.

### **How to prevent elderly depression?**

Here are a few tips to prevent depression and enjoy life to the fullest:-

1. Engage in activities that spark your interest and make you feel alive and happy. Go out and do something you enjoy!
2. If you experience a loss, seek support from family, friends and groups that focus on helping people grieve and cope.
3. Reach out to others. Ask a friend to eat dinner with you to focus on something positive and distract yourself from issues that are worrying you.
4. Volunteer your time, help others and feel good!
5. Take part in social activities to keep your mind sharp.
6. Begin a new hobby or activity to challenge yourself, e.g. cooking, painting, singing and focus on mastering a new, creative skill.
7. Eat grains and green vegetables regularly, eat well to feel your best and to have a healthy mindset.
8. Exercise (after taking your Doctor's advice) according to your physical fitness level. Do resistance training, join a senior exercise class, yoga, walking group or laughter club to add more spark in your step, and to boost your mood.

9. Prepare for changes in your life as much as you can by keeping other things constant, e.g. continue to watch your favorite TV show or bring a few of your favorite possessions to your new home.
10. Problem - solving therapy improves functional and emotional well - being and improves mental health functioning. So, visit a Psychologist.
11. Individual and family counselling sessions supports the capacity of caregivers to care for their loved ones in the home environment and reduces stress and depression in caregivers.
12. Controlling the known risk factors for cerebrovascular disease may prevent depression. These include- reduction of high blood pressure, cessation of smoking, reduction of cholesterol and lipid levels and weight control.

**To know more about How to Prevent Depression in the Elderly contact Geriatric Clinic**

**The Geriatric Clinic is located at  
3<sup>rd</sup> floor, Health Check Department,  
Hinduja Clinic Building**

**Timing - Thursday - 9.30 am to 11.30 am**

**To schedule an appointment call**

**39818181 or 67668181**

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