

Care Transitions & Reduction in Hospitalization

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American Association of Heart Failure Nurses



Depression and Heart Failure

Having heart failure increases your chances of developing depression. One in every five people with heart failure are diagnosed with depression. The onset of depression can be very subtle, and your loved ones may notice it before you do. Depression can often be the result of severe anxiety, so dealing with one problem will often help with the other. Here are some common symptoms that you may have:

Feeling sad or low mood for most of the day

- Lack of energy
- No longer interested in doing things that you used to enjoy
- Significant change in appetite, either eating a lot or not eating enough.
- Changes in sleep, sleeping entire day, or not sleeping at all
- Changes in ability to think clearly or concentrate.
- Feeling worthless or guilty
- Thoughts of harming yourself

Unhealthy ways to deal with depression

- When people experience these mood changes, they will often try to deal with it by themselves. This can make your heart failure worse as well as worsening the depression. These include:
 - Smoking cigarettes or marijuana
 - Drinking alcohol
 - Using illegal drugs
 - Eating unhealthy foods
 - Isolating away from family and loved ones

Healthier ways to deal with depression

- Light exercise, especially outside
- Other outdoor activities like fishing, gardening, or going to an outdoor event
- Religious or spiritual practices
- Spending time with family and friends
- Talking with your doctor or nurse
- Finding hobbies you enjoy
- Attending a support group, ask your healthcare provider for more information
 - Visit [Dale's Battle With Depression](#) for more information!

If your depression does not improve, you may need to be started on medicine to help with your mood.

Talk with your healthcare provider about these issues and they can also refer you for counseling.

Dealing with Heart Failure

Heart failure is a lifelong journey and dealing with it includes dealing with all parts of your life, including your mental and emotional. Your healthcare team is here to help you deal with these problems in a healthy way, just ask them for more information and they will be happy to help you with them.