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A COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE IN HOME CARE



## Causes of Depression in Older Adults and the Elderly

As you grow older, you face significant life changes that can put you at risk for depression. Causes and risk factors that contribute to depression in older adults and the elderly include:

- **Health problems** – Illness and disability; chronic or severe pain; cognitive decline; damage to body image due to surgery or disease.
- **Chronic diseases** – Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's disease, stroke, heart disease, cancer, diabetes, lupus, multiple sclerosis, thyroid disorders, vitamin B12 deficiency and dementia and side effects from their treatment medications.
- **Loneliness and isolation** – Living alone; a dwindling social circle due to deaths or relocation; decreased mobility due to illness or loss of driving privileges; isolation due to hearing and vision deficits.
- **Reduced sense of purpose** – Feelings of purposelessness or loss of identity due to retirement or physical limitations on activities.
- **Fears** – Fear of death or dying; anxiety over financial problems or health issues.
- **Recent bereavements** – The death of friends, family members, and pets; the loss of a spouse or partner.

Source: <http://www.helpguide.org/articles/depression/depression-in-older-adults-and-the-elderly.htm>