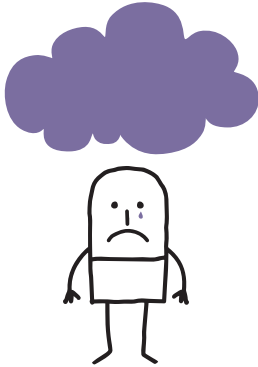


# Depression & Sadness



## WHY DOES THIS HAPPEN?

*People with Alzheimer's or dementia might:*

- be sad about the changes happening to them
- worry about the future
- feel alone
- feel embarrassed to talk with people
- get confused if there is too much noise

*Sometimes changes in the brain make the person lose interest in life.*

It is common for people living with Alzheimer's or dementia to become sad or depressed. They may stop seeing friends or become lonely because friends stop seeing them. They may lose interest in the things they used to do. The sadness can make them stop eating, have trouble sleeping, or make them sleep all the time. These can be signs of depression.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO?

### ACTIVITIES

- make a daily plan to keep them active
- encourage exercise and pleasant physical activity
- tell stories, listen to music, watch funny shows
- cook favorite foods and play pleasant music
- find things to do with other people
- think about using an adult day care center

### TALK WITH THEM

- ask how they are feeling
- don't tell them to "cheer up" or "try harder"
- comfort them, let them know that they are safe and that you care about them
- hug them if they enjoy hugs
- find a counselor who knows about depression and dementia

### MAKE HOME SAFE

- remove guns
- lock up sharp knives
- hide alcohol and medicines
- lock up poisons

### SPEAK WITH A DOCTOR IF THEY:

- talk about hurting themselves
- lose a lot of weight
- sleep all the time



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<https://vda.virginia.gov/dementiacapableva.htm>