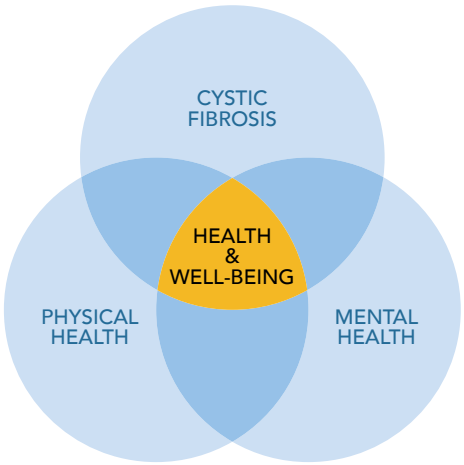
DEPRESSION, ANXIETY *and* CYSTIC FIBROSIS

WHAT THE GUIDELINES MEAN FOR YOU

People with cystic fibrosis and parents who take care of children with CF are two to three times more likely to experience depression, anxiety or both, compared to people in the general population.*

Guidelines were published to help CF care teams provide effective care for people with CF and their families with depression, anxiety or both.

The following recommendations are intended to help you understand that although moments of sadness and anxiety may come and go, **depression and persistent anxiety should be treated as part of your overall health and emotional wellness.**



WHAT IS DEPRESSION?

Depression is a common medical illness that negatively affects the way you feel, think and act. Unlike occasional sadness or feeling blue, clinical depression can last for a long time—weeks, months or years—if not treated. People who have depression can have extended periods where they feel hopeless and lose interest in things they normally would enjoy.

WHAT IS ANXIETY?

Anxiety is a normal emotion that comes and goes in response to fears or worries about changes in health, work, relationships or money. A person may have an anxiety disorder if the anxiety does not go away, gets worse over time and prevents them from participating in ordinary daily activities.

In addition to the generalized anxiety many people with CF and their family caregivers may experience, some people also experience a very specific form of anxiety centered on medical procedures.

WHEN LEFT UNTREATED:

Untreated depression, anxiety or both can affect both your physical and emotional health and interfere with your ability to take care of yourself or your child.

People with untreated depression, anxiety or both:

- Are less likely to manage their treatment plans effectively.
- Tend to have worse lung function.
- Have a lower body mass index (BMI).
- Experience more hospitalizations.
- Often have higher health care costs.
- Experience a lower quality of life.

WHAT YOU CAN DO IF YOU THINK YOU ARE DEPRESSED OR HAVE ANXIETY:

While feelings of depression and anxiety can be a normal response to living with CF, there are things that you can do to prevent, get help for and reduce the risk of either depression or anxiety from returning.

The Cystic Fibrosis International Guidelines Committee (sponsored by the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation and the European Cystic Fibrosis Society) recommends the following for screening and treating depression and anxiety as part of comprehensive CF care:

- **Learn New Coping Skills:** Your CF care team will work with you on effective ways to manage stress and provide ongoing age-appropriate information on how to cope with a chronic disease like CF.
- **Get Screened:** If you have CF and are at least 12 years old, or if you are caring for someone with CF who is age 17 or younger, you will be asked to complete two short screening surveys.
- **Get Help:** If the survey results suggest you are struggling with depression, anxiety or both, your CF care team will recommend further evaluation and may recommend treatment.

*Quittner AL, Goldbeck L, Abbott J, Duff A, Lambrecht P, Solé A, Tiboshc MM, Brucefors AB, Yüksel H, Catastini P, Blackwell L, Barker D. *Prevalence of depression and anxiety in patients with cystic fibrosis and parent caregivers: results of The International Depression Epidemiological Study across nine countries*. Thorax. 2014;69:1090–1097. doi:10.1136/thoraxjnl-2014-205983.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO STAY WELL:

If you have mild symptoms or recognize the beginning signs of depression, anxiety or both, talk to your CF care team. They can work with you to maintain your emotional health.

The following are ways that you can prevent problems with depression or anxiety from getting worse and limit their impact on your life or that of your loved ones.

- Talk with somebody, preferably in person. Many people with depression withdraw and isolate themselves from other people.
- Spend time with people who lift your spirits.
- Avoid alcohol or drugs.
- Continue your CF treatment plan.
- Practice good sleep habits. Do your best to get enough sleep. Go to bed and wake up on a consistent schedule. Avoid staying in bed when you are not sleeping.
- Get outside in nature for 30 minutes every day.
- Make time for things you enjoy.
- Be physically active. Exercise can help reduce stress.
- Practice relaxation techniques.
- Avoid caffeine and cigarettes, which can increase anxiety levels.
- Join a support group. Talking about your problems with people who have the same experience can help you feel less alone.

These activities are not a substitute for professional care, but can make a real difference in your mood.

WHAT ABOUT INSURANCE COVERAGE?

The Affordable Care Act expanded coverage for conditions like depression and anxiety, and most insurance providers cover preventive services, such as depression and anxiety screening. Most large insurance plans cover mental health screenings for adults and children, age 12 and older.

All state Medicaid programs must provide some mental health coverage for treatments, while Medicare covers a range of mental health services. Medicare Part A provides coverage for inpatient care, and Medicare Part B covers outpatient care, such as diagnosis and treatment.

Insurance providers often have different policies regarding coverage for treatment of mental health issues like depression and anxiety. Some cover a limited number of talk therapy visits. Some cover only medication. Check your insurance enrollment materials or call your insurance provider for information about treatment for your depression or anxiety.

The CF Foundation can help people with CF and their families understand their insurance coverage options and connect them to the right resources.

Call **844-COMPASS** (844-266-7277) or email **compass@cff.org**.

TO LEARN MORE

View the CF Foundation and ECFS Guidelines at **cff.org/Care-Guidelines/Depression-Anxiety**

View the CF Foundation's website on emotional wellness at **cff.org/Living-with-CF/Emotional-Wellness**

If you are considering suicide, or if someone you know may be planning to harm him or herself, immediately call **911** or **800-273-8255** (National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) or visit **suicidepreventionlifeline.org**.

For questions, call **1-800-FIGHT-CF** (800-344-4823) or email **info@cff.org**.

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