

Caregiving involves spiritual, physical and mental care for the person.



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dementia and depression are the most common mental and neurological disorders affecting the elderly population. Globally, about 4% of elderly people are affected by anxiety disorders.

Dementia rises with increasing age for those with moderate to severe dementia accounting for about 5% in the general population older than 60 years of age. It increases by 5% every five years, and therefore, can affect one-fourth of the population aged 80 and above. Studies generally suggest that depressive disorders are present in 15% to 20% of the elderly. In a study done by Universiti Malaya (UM) in 2022 among elderly Malaysians, on changes in psychological factors, approximately 47 per cent of participants aged above 55 mentioned an increase in depression, while 21 per cent cited increased anxiety.

Isolation and loneliness can trigger anxiety or early signs of depression. At the same time, changes in roles and responsibilities, lack of financial support, poor mobility and increasing loss of one's capabilities may increase this condition. When children leave home and migrate to other places to start their own family and work they face the empty nest syndrome that trigger depression and anxiety disorder. Those in care or nursing homes seem to also have a higher risk of depression and anxiety. It is therefore important to give appropriate and timely awareness to all primary health care professionals, including nurses and doctors, in managing mental health issues among the elderly population. It should include good health and healthy emotions. To achieve this, an environment for them to stay active and engaged is so important. The presence and involvement of the family is also important for their mental health. ❖

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# Newtbec

NEW WAY OF BEING CHURCH

13th Ordinary Sunday

SALT OF THE EARTH AND LIGHT OF THE WORLD:

COMMUNION (INCLUSIVE), PARTICIPATION (CREATIVE) & MISSION (BRIDGE BUILDING)

MONTHLY FOCUS:  
FAMILY AND CARING FOR  
THE ELDERLY

FOCUS EVENT:  
WORLD DAY OF  
PARENTS AND ELDERLY



## MENTAL HEALTH Issues of Older Malaysians

Elderly people, those above 60 years old have a greater possibility to develop mental health issues. The risk is higher as one ages. According to the World Health Organization (WHO),