

Coping with a Mesothelioma diagnosis

Receiving a mesothelioma cancer diagnosis is stressful and overwhelming, no matter how strong someone is. While the diagnosis is sudden and immediate, acceptance is a process. It will take **time to process** all the layers of grief and loss. As time goes by, they will experience five stages on the way to acceptance.

- Denial
- Anger
- Bargaining
- Sadness and Depression
- Acceptance

Reducing stress

Mental health is an important aspect of living well after diagnosis. The stress of a cancer diagnosis can cause depression, anxiety, and PTSD, which can worsen symptoms and speed progression of the disease. People who are able to keep their stress low with techniques like meditation, exercise, yoga, and breathing techniques may experience a **reduction of symptoms** and feel a greater sense of well-being.

Since mesothelioma is often diagnosed in the late stages of the disease, people receiving the diagnosis may have to make difficult decisions about their life and health very soon.

The compassion of hospice care

Hospice care is a compassionate choice that can greatly increase the peace and comfort for the individual and their family members. Hospice believes that every person deserves a high quality of life, regardless of their prognosis. Caregivers visit with pain medications and offer kindness, compassion, and understanding.

Hospice caregivers can help relieve family caregivers of some of their duties so that they can get some rest or attend to other things their loved one may need. Hospice counselors can provide mental, emotional, and spiritual support. They can also assist with end-of-life decisions such as funeral arrangements and naming beneficiaries. Hospice care can be provided at home, in a hospice facility, or in a hospital.

Sometimes people fear that using hospice means the person is giving up. However, accepting hospice help is an act of embracing the life remaining and making it the best it can possibly be. It's about feeling good enough to spend quality time with the people and things that mean the most.

No one has to cope alone

While nothing will make the diagnosis go away, there are things that can make coping with the prognosis easier. Family, friends, journaling, and support groups are all valuable aids in dealing with a mesothelioma diagnosis. Exercise, yoga and meditation techniques can help keep anxiety and depression at bay.

Support groups allow a person to express their feelings in the company of others who are facing the same **devastating prognosis**. Journaling can be a self-serve way of expressing feelings and can even be a quiet place to plan. Hospice counselors can also be an important part of the team, providing a safe space for venting heavy feelings. The bottom line is that no one has to cope alone.