

Depression in cancer patients overlooked: Study

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Singapore: According to a new research published in journal Lancet, clinically depressed cancer patients are deprived of the psychological therapy. Researchers indicated that only the physical symptoms of cancer patients are focused at the expense of mental health.

The team revealed that a study conducted on 21,000 cancer patients estimated that 6 to 13 percent of cancer patients suffered from clinical depression, which is often overlooked though the treatment costs are much lesser than cancer treatment.

Cancer Charity has described the current situation as 'heartbreaking' stating that cancer patients who are already dealing with the toughest fight of their lives are also struggling with depression, without adequate support.

People suffering with depression feel persistently low, lack of sleep and have poor appetites. Stating that 75 percent of patients reporting these complaints did not receive adequate medical treatment, Dr Stefan Symeonides, University of Edinburgh, said, "Day-to-day oncologists like myself see the profound impact depression can have on a patient with cancer."

Scientists further said that a tailor made approach designed specifically for patients with cancer can substantially reduce depressive symptoms. The study conducted on 500 patients indicated that the therapy halved the depression scores of more than 60 percent sufferers.

The team indicated that the therapy that costs around \$600 per patient helped in better cancer management by including

antidepressant drugs, encouraging patients to become active and healthy.