

EMOTIONAL HEALTH & WELLNESS



Have you ever gone to your doctor for either the first time or for a follow-up visit and received some news that was either surprising or worse than you had expected? Your reaction might have been one of frustration and irritation. **Why did this happen to me? What is going to become of me and my family? Is everything going to turn out okay?** You might feel like you are the only person going through these different emotions.

Know that these feelings are normal and range from fear, denial, anger, bargaining to depression. Everyone goes through these stages of sadness when dealing with an illness. And it is not always predictable. You might go through all of the stages in a matter of a few minutes. Or you might get trapped in one of these emotions for weeks or months. Moving quickly between these emotions is what most people do, especially early in the course of illness. As illness progress you may stay longer in one emotion. Finally, for most people the roller coaster of emotion ends and there is acceptance.

What happens when you (or a loved one) gets stuck in one of those strong emotions? First, recognize that you are stuck. You might spot it in yourself. Or, others around you might have to point it out. Here are some signs you might be stuck:

- Follow-up visits might be missed.
- You do not take your medications properly.
- Good nutrition, exercise, and proper sleep are avoided.