**'Anxiety, depression may up risk of death from cancers'**

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Higher levels of [**anxiety**](http://www.speakingtree.in/topics/emotions/anxiety) and [**depression**](http://m.timesofindia.com/topic/Depression) may increase the risk of death from certain [**cancers**](http://m.timesofindia.com/topic/Cancer), scientists have warned.

The findings add to the growing evidence that [**psychological distress**](http://m.timesofindia.com/topic/psychological-distress) could have some predictive capacity for certain physical conditions. There is some evidence that psychological distress (anxiety and depression) is related to increased rates of cardiovascular disease, but links with different types of cancer are either unclear or untested.

Researchers from University College London and University of Edinburgh in the UK set out to examine if psychological distress is a potential predictor of site specific cancer mortality.

They analysed data from 16 studies which started between 1994 and 2008. In total, 163,363 men and women aged 16 or over and free from cancer at the start of the study, were included.  
  
Psychological distress scores were measured using the general health questionnaire and participants were monitored for an aver age of nine and a half years. During this time, there were 4,353 deaths from cancer.  
  
Several factors that could have influenced the results were taken into account, including age, sex, education, socioeconomic status, BMI, smoking and alcohol intake.  
  
"After statistical control for these factors, the results show that compared with people in the least distressed group, death rates in the most distressed group were consistently higher for cancer of the bowel, prostate, pancreas, and oesophagus and for leukaemia," said lead author [**David Batty**](http://m.timesofindia.com/topic/David-Batty) from University College London in the UK.  
  
This association may also be affected by reverse causality, where undiagnosed (early) cancer might have had an underlying impact on mood.  
  
The study was published in The BMJ journal.