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mel·an·chol·y  (měl ən-kōl'ē)

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n.

1. Sadness or depression of the spirits; gloom.
2. Pensive reflection or contemplation.

3. *Archaic*

a. Black bile.

b. An emotional state characterized by sullenness and outbreaks of violent anger, believed to arise from an excess of black bile.

adj.

1. Feeling, showing, or expressing depression of the spirits; sad or dejected. See Synonyms at [sad](#).
2. Causing or tending to cause sadness or gloom: *a letter with some melancholy news*.
3. Pensive; thoughtful.

[Middle English *malencolie*, *melancolie*, from Old French, from Late Latin *melancholia*, from Greek *melankholiā* : *melās*, *melan-*, black + *kholē*, bile; see **ghel-**² [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

mel an·chol'i·ly *adv.*

mel an·chol'i·ness *n.*

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