

## WHAT ARE MENTAL HEALTH DISORDERS?

- Mental health disorders are health conditions that affect a person's mood, behavior, and thoughts, as well as how they cope with stress and interact with other people.
- Many people have mental health concerns on occasion, but it becomes a problem when the signs and symptoms cause stress and affect a person's ability to function.
- Mental health disorders are common, affecting 1 in every 5 adults in the U.S.

## QUICK FACTS

- 50% of mental health disorders start by age 14, while 75% start by age 24.
- Many mental health disorders can be effectively treated with medication, psychotherapy, or a combination of both.
- Mental health disorders can be either temporary or long lasting. It's also possible for a person to have more than one mental health disorder at a time.
- If left untreated, mental health disorders can lead to complications. These include:
  - Relationship trouble.
  - Family conflict.
  - Social isolation.
  - Substance use.
  - Problems with work and school.
  - Legal or financial problems.
  - Homelessness.
  - Self-harm or harm to others.
  - Weakened immune system.
  - Serious medical conditions.

## CAUSES OF MENTAL HEALTH DISORDERS

The exact cause of mental health disorders is unknown. However, research suggests that they are the result of a combination of factors, including:

- Genetics.
- Biology.
- Trauma.
- Environmental stress.

Sometimes, mental health disorders can appear without any cause. They can also be brought on by major changes in someone's life, such as illness, death of a family member, divorce, loss of a job or a change in financial situation, the birth of a child, or moving to a new city.

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someone who can help.

# SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF MENTAL HEALTH DISORDERS

- Feeling sad, down, hopeless, or helpless.
- Feeling confused, forgetful, on edge, upset, worried, or scared.
- Excessive anger, hostility, or violence.
- Withdrawal from friends or activities.
- Low or no energy.
- Sleeping too much or too little.
- Can't cope with daily problems or stress.
- Substance use.
- Increased or decreased appetite.
- Binge eating, anorexia, or bulimia.
- Changes in sex drive.
- Thinking about suicide.
- Unexplained aches and pains.
- Difficulty sleeping.
- Difficulty focusing.
- Difficulty completing routine chores.
- Thinking unwanted thoughts.
- Manic behavior, including increased talkativeness, racing thoughts, and needing less sleep.
- Delusions, paranoia, or hallucinations.

## WHEN TO SEEK HELP

Learn how to recognize the warning signs when someone is at risk for suicide, and what action steps you can take.

If you believe that you or someone you love may be in danger of suicide or harming others:

- Call **911** (if danger for self-harm seems imminent).
- Call or text **988** to reach the **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline** and talk to a caring professional.
- Ask them if they are thinking about killing themselves. This will not put the idea into their head or make it more likely that they will attempt suicide.
- Listen without judging and show that you care.
- Stay with the person, or make sure that they are in a private, secure place with another caring person until you can get further help.
- Remove any objects that could be used in a suicide attempt.

Again, you can always call or text **988** to reach the **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline** and speak with a professional who can give you guidance.

## TAKE ACTION

If you have reason to believe that you or a loved one is experiencing new or worsening symptoms of a mental health disorder and is not in immediate danger, the sooner you address the issue, the better the outcome.

- Reach out to your primary care provider or a mental health professional.
- Remember that early intervention is always best for your child's health and well-being.

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Resources available upon request.