



## Men and Mental Health: What to Know

**Mental health issues like anxiety and depression affect all genders, yet we usually don't hear as much about men struggling with these problems as we do with women.** While attitudes are changing, one reason is the view held by many men that troubling or negative emotions like sadness, anxiety or stress is a sign of weakness. This can make them reluctant to speak up about distressing emotions or to seek treatment. Yet, mental health issues can be effectively treated with counseling, medication, or both. Getting help early is vital.

### Here's what you should know to feel and function better

#### **Know overlooked signs that something is wrong.**

Some men who are depressed may appear to be angry, irritable or aggressive instead of sad. Or, they may feel tired or run down, lose interest in work, family or hobbies, have difficulty sleeping, or turn to drugs and alcohol to cope with their symptoms.

#### **Don't ignore physical symptoms—talk to your doctor.**

For example, a racing heart, tightening chest, ongoing headaches or digestive issues may be signs of a mental health problem.

**Open up to a loved one or friend.** Remember, mental health problems are not a weakness, and letting someone know about your struggles and getting help is a strength!

**Practice healthy habits.** In addition to professional help, lifestyle habits shown to promote mental health include keeping to regular mealtimes and sleep routines (going to bed and rising at the same time).

#### **If you are receiving treatment, make some modifications.**

Avoid alcohol. Don't take on too much at once (break large tasks into smaller ones) and delay making big decisions until you feel better.



### Reach out to a Health Advocate Licensed Counselor!

Learn coping strategies to help manage stress and other troubling emotions. Counseling is confidential and you, your spouse, dependent children, parents and parents-in-law can all use the service. **Just call.**



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## How to help a male friend or loved one



**Listen and encourage him.** Remind him that depression can lift given treatment and time.



**Urge him to get help from a doctor or mental health professional.** Help make the appointment and offer to accompany him. Help him keep his appointments. Remember, some men are more willing to talk to their doctor first about issues like losing interest in activities or work problems.



**Encourage physical and social activity.** Invite him for walks and other events. If you get some push-back, keep trying, but don't force it.



**Depression is a key risk factor for suicide**, and four times as many men compared with women die from suicide. If a friend or loved one mentions suicide, urge them to call the Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or call it for them. **If they are in imminent danger, call 911.**

Sources: CDC <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics/suicide.shtml>



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