

# MENTAL HEALTH

DIAGNOSIS AND SYMPTOMS



*WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT  
COMMON MENTAL HEALTH DISORDERS*

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## DISCLOSURE

The diagnosis and symptoms discussed in this ebook are not limited to what is listed. Please do not attempt to self diagnosis, or diagnose others.

The purpose of this ebook is to provide education on common mental health illnesses. It is important to notify a professional therapist, psychiatrist, or physician if you notice symptoms present in yourself. If you notice symptoms in others, please encourage them to seek professional help as well.

Thank you.

Mental Health is a combination of your emotional, psychological, and social well being which impacts how we think, feel, and act. According to [mentalhealth.gov](https://www.mentalhealth.gov), our mental health determines how we handle stress, react to others and situations, and make life choices.

Throughout the course of our lives, starting in childhood, we experience circumstances in life that can affect our mental health. Such circumstances include poverty, bullying, death, witnessing domestic violence, emotional abuse, and much more. When we experience such events, it creates stress and alters our mental state. Once the stress is experienced, our moods change, behaviors increase, and our thinking is not logical.

Other factors that contribute to our mental health includes biological make-up (genetics), and family history of mental health.

## **POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER**

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), is a mental health illness that develops following the exposure to trauma. The traumatic event can include abuse, incarceration, house fires, robbery, bullying, witnessing or experiencing domestic violence, assault, sexual trafficking, homelessness, etc.

When individuals experience one or more traumatic events and struggle to recover, symptoms of PTSD become present. When triggered by the traumatic event, individuals may experience:

- Nightmares of the traumatic event
- Flashbacks/distressing memories
- Hypersensitivity
- Dissociation
- Avoidance behavior
- Blocking out the event
- Agitation/irritation
- Anxiety
- Insomnia
- Fear

These symptoms can occur in adults, youth, and children. Some individuals may experience more than one symptom at a time, and the symptom(s) can last for days, weeks, months, or years.

If you or someone you know has experienced a traumatic event and displays these symptoms, please seek professional help or talk to a supportive loved one who can help you through this difficult time.

## **MAJOR DEPRESSIVE DISORDER**

Major Depressive Disorder, or depression, is a mental health illness that decreases moods and interests. Individuals who experience depression often times feel sadness, low energy, and have difficulty elevating their moods back to a place of happiness.

Depression can be caused following a traumatic event, family history, life changes, medical conditions, and more.

Common symptoms of depression include:

- Loss of interest in usual activities
- Difficulty completing tasks
- Feelings of emptiness
- Reduced sexual desire
- Suicidal thoughts
- Decreased mood
- Low energy
- Irritability
- Isolation
- Worthlessness
- Restlessness
- Guilt

These symptoms can occur in adults, youth, and children. Some individuals may experience more than one symptom at a time, and the symptom(s) can last for weeks or months. It impacts relationships and daily activities.

If you or someone you know is experiencing symptoms of depression, please seek professional help.



## **GENERALIZED ANXIETY DISORDER**

Generalized anxiety disorder is a mental health illness surrounding feelings of fear, worry, or distress. Anxiety can occur following a traumatic event, stress (jobs, romantic relationships, bills, financial strain, school, etc), medical factors, or family history.

Individuals who suffer from anxiety may experience both emotional and physical symptoms that can impact their daily functioning. These symptoms include;

- Racing thoughts
- Unwanted thoughts
- Excessive worrying
- Lack of concentration
- Restlessness
- Palpitations
- Panicking
- Sweating
- Fidgeting
- Fatigue
- Fear
- Nausea
- Insomnia

These symptoms can occur in adults, youth, and children. Some individuals may experience more than one symptom at a time, and the symptom(s) can last for days, weeks, or months. It impacts relationships and daily activities.

If you or someone you know is experiencing symptoms of anxiety, please seek professional help or talk to a supportive loved one who can help you through this difficult time.

Other forms of anxiety include social anxiety, separation anxiety, phobias, and panic disorder.

## **ATTENTION DEFICIT HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER**

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, better known as ADHD, is a mental health disorder that impacts the brain's ability to sustain attention. ADHD can also cause one to have impulsive or hyperactive behavior. Both impulsivity/hyperactivity and inattention interfere with daily functioning and development.

ADHD is typically identified and diagnosed early in childhood, but can lead into adulthood. Causes of ADHD vary from a range of issues such as genetics, exposure to environmental toxins, maternal drug or alcohol use, premature birth, etc.

There are two classifications within the ADHD diagnosis, inattention and hyperactivity/impulsivity.

Symptoms of ADHD with inattention type include difficulty concentrating, short attention span, wandering, unorganized, loses things easily, easily distracted, struggles to follow through with instructions, etc.

Symptoms of ADHD with hyperactivity/impulsivity type consist of constant movement, excessive talking, or fidgeting; loud talking, outbursts, interrupting, difficulty waiting, instant gratification, and making decisions without thinking.



## **ATTENTION DEFICIT HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER CONT.**

Though there are differences between the symptoms, it is common to witness symptoms in both children and adults. If present, children can be diagnosed with both inattention and hyperactivity/impulsivity. It is good to note that when observing ADHD symptoms, behaviors should be seen in multiple settings (home, school, stores, library, etc)

If your child or someone you know has presenting symptoms of ADHD, please inform a pediatrician. ADHD is typically diagnosed in childhood, but it can be diagnosed at a later age in teenagers and young adults.

## **SCHIZOPHRENIA**

Schizophrenia is a mental health illness that impacts an individual's daily functioning and ability to think, feel, and behave logically. This disorder is one of the most severe mental illnesses as it causes one to be out of touch with reality, and can be terrifying for loved ones to witness. Causes of schizophrenia derive from genetics, environmental factors, and brain structure.

Symptoms of schizophrenia include:

Hallucinations

Delusions

Thought disorders (unusual or dysfunctional ways of thinking)

Movement disorders (agitated body movements)

"Flat affect" (reduced expression of emotions via facial expression or voice tone)

Reduced feelings of pleasure in everyday life

Difficulty beginning and sustaining activities

Reduced speaking

Poor "executive functioning" (the ability to understand information and use it to make decisions)

Trouble focusing or paying attention

Problems with "working memory" (the ability to use information immediately after learning it)

The symptoms listed can be seen in individuals ages 16-30. However, symptoms can be present in children.

If you or someone you know is experiencing symptoms of schizophrenia, please seek professional help.

<https://www.nimh.nih.gov>

## **BIPOLAR DISORDERS**

Bipolar disorder is a depressive like mental health illness that consists of changes in moods, activities, and energy. Bi-polar disorder is generally caused by family history or genetics. There are two main types of this disorder, which are Bi-polar I and Bi-Polar II.

According to the National Institute of Mental Health, Bi-polar I disorder is defined by manic episodes that last at least 7 days, or by manic symptoms that are so severe that the person needs immediate hospital care.

Symptoms of Bipolar I (manic):

Feel very "up," "high," or elated  
Have a lot of energy  
Have increased activity levels  
Feel "jumpy" or "wired"  
Have trouble sleeping  
Become more active than usual  
Talk really fast about a lot of different things  
Be agitated, irritable, or "touchy"  
Feel like their thoughts are going very fast  
Think they can do a lot of things at once  
Do risky things, like spend a lot of money or have reckless sex



## **BIPOLAR DISORDERS CONT.**

Bipolar II is a pattern of depressive episodes and hypomanic episodes, but not the full-blown manic episodes as described in Bipolar I.

Symptoms of Bipolar II (depressive episode):

Feel very sad, down, empty, or hopeless  
Have very little energy  
Have decreased activity levels  
Have trouble sleeping, they may sleep too little or too much  
Feel like they can't enjoy anything  
Feel worried and empty  
Have trouble concentrating  
Forget things a lot  
Eat too much or too little  
Feel tired or "slowed down"  
Think about death or suicide

Sometimes a mood episode includes symptoms of both manic and depressive symptoms. People experiencing an episode with both features may feel very sad, empty, or hopeless, while at the same time feeling extremely energized.

If you or someone you know is experiencing symptoms of Bipolar, please seek professional help.

<https://www.nimh.nih.gov>

**For more information  
regarding mental health, visit:**

<https://www.mentalhealth.gov>

<https://www.nimh.nih.gov>

<https://mhanational.org>

<https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org>

<https://www.therapyforblackgirls.com>

<https://www.psychologytoday.com>

National Suicide Prevention Hotline:  
1-800-273-8255