

**Narcissistic Personality Disorder** By ***Mark Zimmerman***, MD, Rhode Island Hospital Last full review/revision May 2021| Content last modified May 2021

**Narcissistic personality disorder is characterized by a pervasive pattern of feeling superior (grandiosity), needing admiration, and lacking empathy.**

**Personality disorders** are long-lasting, pervasive patterns of thinking, perceiving, reacting, and relating that cause the person significant distress and/or impair the person's ability to function. People with narcissistic personality disorder have an inflated view of self-worth (called grandiosity). They also have problems with self-esteem. To bolster their sense of superiority and self-esteem, they do the following:

- Associate with special people
- Become a part of superior institutions
- Devalue other people

They also want to be praised. Estimates of how common narcissistic personality disorder is vary, but the disorder may occur in up to 6% of the general population. It is more common among men.

### **Narcissist Personality Disorder Criteria (DSM-5)**

People must persistently have an inflated view of self-worth, a need for admiration, and a lack of empathy, as shown by at least five of the following beginning by early adulthood:

- They have an exaggerated, unfounded sense of their own importance and talents (grandiosity).
- They are preoccupied with fantasies of unlimited achievements, influence, power, intelligence, beauty, or perfect love.
- They believe that they are special and unique and should associate only with people of the highest caliber.
- They need to be unconditionally admired.
- They feel entitled.
- They exploit others to achieve their own goals.
- They lack empathy.
- They envy others and believe that others envy them.
- They are arrogant and haughty.