


 SEARCH

Assistance? 800-327-2251

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Where to Turn for Mental Health (3 min read)

It's normal to feel stressed or anxious now and then. But it's time to call for help if emotional issues last for a long time and interfere with your life, your job, or your personal relationships.

With all the mental health resources and effective treatments available these days, you do not need to suffer and wonder what's wrong. Education and awareness have done much to erase the stigma once attached to mental illness. Still, many people don't seek help for mental health needs.

Mental conditions are real. They can be life-threatening. But they're also common and very treatable. How do you know you need help? As with many physical health problems, change is the key. If you have a marked and persistent change in personality, mood, or eating or sleeping habits, that's a sign something may be going on.

Symptoms to look for

These are other warning signs:

- Feeling unable to cope with your day-to-day problems, work assignments, or usual household activities
- Being overwhelmed by a deep sense of sadness, hopelessness, or helplessness
- Having extreme mood swings, from high or hyper to down in the dumps
- Withdrawing from people and normal activities
- Believing things that are not true or hearing voices that are not there
- Having thoughts or memories that you can't get out of your head
- Abusing alcohol or drugs
- Getting very angry or acting violently
- Having thoughts about suicide or hurting someone else
- Having a plan of how you would commit suicide

If you have any of these symptoms, it's better to get treatment sooner than later. These are warning signs that you definitely need help.

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Make the call

Get help right away any time you think you might hurt yourself or someone else. Call 800-SUICIDE (800-784-2433) or your local crisis center. Or look in the government pages of your local phone book for the numbers of emergency mental health treatment facilities near you. Lastly, if you are in an immediate state of crisis, it is best to go to a hospital emergency room for temporary help.

There, healthcare providers will also be able to tell you where and how to get more help.

Other resources:

- Your healthcare provider. Your healthcare provider knows you and likely will notice any changes in your mood or personality. Your healthcare provider can also rule out possible physical reasons for your symptoms.
- Employee assistance programs (EAP). If your company has an EAP, ask for a referral to an appropriate provider or treatment program in your community.
- Community mental health centers. These organizations give counseling and other services on a sliding-fee scale, based on your income.
- Crisis centers. On-site mental health professionals give immediate evaluation and treatment.
- Support and self-help groups. Alcoholics Anonymous and the National Alliance on Mental Illness are examples of peer and family support groups that meet both online and in person.
- Word-of-mouth referrals. These can come from friends or family.
- Psychiatrist or medical healthcare provider. These professionals can give counseling and medicine.
- Psychologists. These professionals have doctorate degrees. They specialize in psychotherapy and human behavior.
- Mental health nurse practitioners. These professionals have advanced degrees. They can give counseling and medicine.

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