

About Mental Health Problems



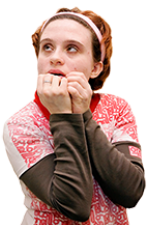
A mental health problem is when it becomes difficult to cope with your thoughts and feelings.



There are lots of different types of mental health problems.



- Depression is when you feel sad or down for many weeks or months.



- Anxiety is when you feel worried or afraid a lot of the time.



- Schizophrenia is when you have muddled thoughts and are not sure what is real.



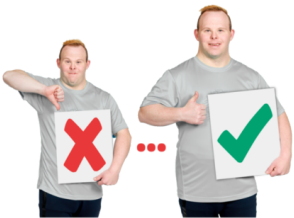
Depression and anxiety are 2 of the most common mental health problems. People often have depression and anxiety at the same time.



Schizophrenia is a less common mental health problem.



Having a mental health problem is often upsetting, confusing and frightening.



But with the right care, treatment and support it is likely that you will feel better.

What Are The Symptoms of Mental Health Problems?



Symptoms are signs that show something is wrong.

Anxiety



Most people feel worried and afraid sometimes. Anxiety is when you feel worried or afraid a lot of the time.



You might feel:

- Tense.
- Nervous (like you have butterflies in your stomach).





- Dizzy or light-headed.



- Sick.



- Hot and sweaty.



- Like you can't stop worrying about things.



- Worried that other people are angry or upset with you.



- Worried about what might happen in the future.



- Restless (like you can't stay still).



- Like the things around you aren't real.



You might:

- Have a churning feeling in your stomach.



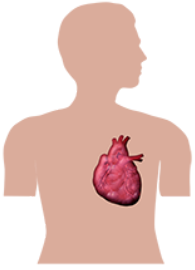
- Have pins and needles.



- Have headaches or other aches and pains.



- Breathe very fast.



- Feel your heart beating fast.



- Have problems sleeping.



- Need to go to the toilet more or less often.



- Not want to have sex.



- Have panic attacks – this is where you suddenly feel faint, dizzy, shaky and you might struggle to breath.



Depression

Depression is when you feel sad or down for many weeks or months.



You might feel:

- Sad and upset.



- Like you want to cry a lot.



- Bad about yourself.



- Like you want to stay away from other people.



- Tired.



- That everything is difficult.



You might:

- Not enjoy doing things you usually enjoy.



- Find it hard to remember things.



- Smoke or drink more, or take more drugs than usual.



- Not want to have sex.



- Find it hard to sleep, or sleep too much.



- Eat very little or eat a lot.



- Move around very slowly or feel restless (like you can't stay still).



If you have bad depression:

- You might have psychotic symptoms – this means that you see and believe things that are not real.



- You might want to hurt or kill yourself.



Schizophrenia

You might:

- Not be interested in things.
- Feel like you and your feelings are separate things.





- Find it hard to concentrate.



- Feel like you want to stay away from other people.



- Have **hallucinations** – this means that you see and hear things that other people can't see or hear.



- Have **delusions** – this means that you believe things that other people don't believe, and that often can't be true.



- Have lots of thoughts and ideas flying through your head very quickly, making it hard to think clearly.



- Speak very quickly and stumble over your words.



- Not want to look after yourself – like not wanting to have a shower, brush your teeth or eat properly.



- Feel upset and confused.



- Feel like you don't trust other people.



If you think that you need help with a mental health problem, go and see your GP (doctor).

Treatment and Care For Mental Health Problems

Treatment



Talk to your GP about treatment. There are several different treatments that may work for you. Your GP can help you to find the right treatment.



- **Self-help:** if you have anxiety or depression, your GP might suggest some useful books to read, or a course you can do on the internet.



- **Talking treatments:** this is where you talk with a therapist. This might be on your own or as part of a group.



One talking treatment is **Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)**. This helps you to find ways to cope with the symptoms of your mental health problem.



- **Taking medicine:** your doctor might give you medicine.

There are some different types of medicine...



If you have anxiety you might have '**antidepressant**' medicine.

Or you might have a type of medicine like '**pregabalin**', which is often used to treat people with epilepsy.



If you have depression you would have '**antidepressant**' medicine.



If you have schizophrenia you would have '**antipsychotic**' medicine.



You might need to try a few different medicines until you find one that works for you.



Some medicines can cause side-effects – this means that they can give you other problems with your body or mind.



You should make sure you feel happy about taking medicine before starting this treatment.



- **Family intervention:** if you have schizophrenia, this is a talking treatment for your family or your carers. They learn how best to support you.



- **Arts therapies:** if you have schizophrenia, this is a treatment where you can express yourself through art. This could be music, painting, dance, voice or drama.



Your doctor should ask you to come for appointments to check how your treatment is working.



If it is not working well, your doctor should offer other treatments.



Care for yourself

There are things you can do yourself to help you to manage your mental health problem



Try to take good care of yourself:

- Get plenty of sleep.



- Eat healthy food.



- Be active or do exercise, like walking or swimming.



- Have a shower and get dressed, even if you are not leaving the house.



- Don't drink alcohol or use drugs.



- Talk to someone about how you feel. You could talk to someone you trust, or you can call the Samaritans on 0116 123



- You might like to join a peer support group to talk to other people with a mental health problem. To find a group call MIND on 0300 123 3393.



- Do things you enjoy.



- Try a new hobby or volunteering.



- Try **mindfulness** – this is where you learn how to keep your mind in the present moment.



- If you have anxiety, you could try to manage your worries by writing them down, or setting aside a special time to think about your worries.



- You could try some breathing exercises.



- You could try things to help you to relax, like having a massage or listening to a hypnotherapy CD.



- If you have schizophrenia, stop smoking (if you smoke) – smoking can stop your medicine from working.



- Look for warning signs that you are becoming unwell.



- Plan with other people what you would like to happen if you become very unwell.



To get more information and advice about mental health problems, contact MIND:



Telephone 0300 123 3393

Email info@mind.org.uk



If you need to talk to someone at any time of the day or night, contact the Samaritans:



Telephone 116 123

Email Jo@samaritans.org