



January Education: Slash the Stigma

Identify Potential Risk Factors

Work and/or home environment

- Have you experienced great, or ongoing change at work or home?
- Do your coworkers or family members express high negativity?
- Is there any harassment or other forms of toxicity?
- Have you considered leaving work or your relationship?

Genetics

- Maternal or paternal, has someone in your family been diagnosed with a mental illness?
- Have you had a past experience with mental illness?
- “It runs in the family,” is never an excuse to avoid help.
- Trauma
- Have you had a childhood or recent event that has left you feeling scarred, lonely, or hurt?

Medical conditions or medications

- Certain medical conditions have an increased risk for depression.
- Do you have cancer, a chronic disease, a recent heart attack, etc?
- Do you feel like you have limitations and anxiety about future?
- How are you coping with ongoing treatment?

Are you taking any of these meds?

- Beta-blockers
- Corticosteroids
- Benzodiazepine hypnotics
- Parkinson's drugs
- Hormone alternating drugs
- Stimulants
- Anticonvulsants
- Proton pump inhibitors and H2 Blockers
- Statins and lipid-lowering drugs
- Anticholinergic drugs used to treat stomach cramps and other GI disorders

Acknowledge Any Signs and Symptoms

Anxiety

Emotional:

- Apprehension or dread
- Tense or jumpy
- Restlessness or irritability
- Negative anticipation and weary of signs of danger

Physical:

- Pounding or racing heart and shortness of breath
- Sweating, tremors, and twitches
- Headaches, fatigue, and insomnia
- Upset stomach, frequent urination or diarrhea

Causes:

- Genetics
- Environment

Depression

Emotional:

- Hopelessness, worthlessness or guilt
- Irritability
- Persistent sad or “empty” mood
- Decreased interest in normal pleasures
- Persistent thoughts of death or suicide

Physical:

- Slower movement and decreased physical activity
- Slow or soft speech
- Difficulty sitting still and concentrating
- Insomnia and headaches
- Cramps and other digestive problems
- Appetite and/or weight changes

Causes:

- Trauma
- Genetics
- Life circumstances
- Brain changes
- Medical conditions
- Alcohol or drug abuse

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

Re-experiencing:

- Flashbacks
- Bad dreams
- Frightening thoughts

Avoidance:

- Staying away from places, events or objects
- Avoiding thoughts or feelings related to traumatic event

Cognitive and mood:

- Trouble remembering key features of traumatic event
- Negative thoughts about oneself or the world
- Distorted feelings like guilt or blame
- Loss of interest in enjoyable activities

Arousal:

- Easily startled
- Feeling tense
- Having difficulty sleeping
- Having angry outbursts

Causes:

- Exposure to trauma
- Accompanied by depression, substance abuse and other anxiety disorders

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD)

Obsessions - intrusive, irrational thoughts or impulses that causes anxiety:

- Fear of germs or contamination
- Unwanted forbidden or taboo thoughts involving sex and religion
- Thoughts of harm or aggression towards others or self
- Having things symmetrical or in a perfect order
- Doubts about having done something right, like turning off the stove
- Fears of saying or shouting inappropriate things in public

Compulsions - repetitive behaviors to temporarily relieve anxiety about obsessions:

- Excessive cleaning or hand-washing
- Ordering and arranging things a particular & precise way
- Repeatedly checking on things, such as repeatedly checking to see if the door is locked
- Repetitive counting
- Mental checks

Causes:

- Genetics
- Brain structure and functioning
- Environment or trauma

Bipolar Disorder (Manic-Depressive Illness)

Manic episode or Bipolar I:

- Feelings of elation or extreme excitement
- Increased energy and/or activity
- Insomnia and feeling "wired"
- Talking fast and feeling as though thoughts are moving very fast
- Easily agitated or irritated
- Belief in excessive multi-tasking
- Risky behaviors

Depressive episode or Bipolar II:

- Feelings of emptiness or hopelessness
- Decreased energy and/or activity
- Insomnia and/or excessive sleep
- Lack of enjoyment
- Difficulty concentrating and forgetfulness
- Irregular eating habits
- Thoughts of death or suicide

Causes:

- Genetics
- Brain structure and function
- Stress

Utilize Available Resources and Treatments

Start with seeking treatment:

NATIONAL

Suicide Prevention

800-273-8255

Eating Disorders Association

800-931-2237

Rape, Abuse & Incest Network

800-656-4673

Substance Abuse & Mental Health

800-662-4257

Gambling Hotline

800-552-4700

Anxiety Hotline

888-826-9438

ChildHelp National Child Abuse Hotline

800-422-4453

National Domestic Violence Hotline

800-799-7233

Adult/Elder Abuse

800-222-8000

"Connect" Crisis Text Line

741741

Hopeline Network

800-784-2433

LOCAL

GA Crisis Hotline

800-715-4225

ACCGov Employee Assistance Program

800-854-1446

The Cottage Sexual Assault Center

706-353-1912

Athens Alcoholics Anonymous

706-543-0436

Nuci's Space

706-227-1515

Narcotics Anonymous

818-773-9999

Athens Family Violence Clinic

706-369-6272

Project Safe

706-543-3331

United Way Northeast Georgia

Dial: 2-1-1

Text:

898211888-826-9438

- Advantage Behavioral Health Systems
- Family Counseling Services
- Athens Area Commencement Center

Types of treatment options that might be part of a treatment plan:

- Psychologists, counselors, clinicians, therapists, social workers, psychiatrists, mental health nurse practitioners, primary care physicians, family nurse practitioners, or certified peer specialists
- Psychotherapy and psychosocial treatments
- Medications
- Behavioral or lifestyle changes such as exercise, diet, and sleep maintenance
- Addressing social isolation
- Complementary or integrative health approaches - therapeutic methods in addition to or combined with standard medical procedures or treatment plans
- Settings:
 - Private practice
 - Community centers
 - Substance abuse treatment centers

Having the conversation with friends and family:

- Support is not control
- The illness influences their behavior
- Learn as much as possible
- Show interest in treatment
- Encouragement and love
- Atmosphere of cooperation within family
- Listen
- Resume 'normal' functioning
- Don't push
- Express support out loud
- Have a safety or crisis plan
- Don't give up

Having the conversation with your general practitioner (GP):

- Write down a list of questions beforehand
- Be open to discussion and learning about something you don't understand
- If you feel like the GP is not on your side, seek out another physician or ask for a referral to a counselor or therapist
- If you or someone you're with receives a prescription, ask about its function and side effects

Click the Links Below for Source Information

[Links between medication & depression](#)

[Mental Health Topics](#)

[Mental Health Conditions](#)

[Talking to your GP about mental health](#)

