



Mental Health & You

How do I know if I have a mental health condition?

Understanding what is considered "normal" mental health can be difficult. For example, when does nervousness become a phobia? When does "just feeling sad" become depression, which is a serious condition? A mental health professional can help you figure out whether you have a mental health condition. If you do, treatment can help you feel better. People can and do recover from mental health conditions. If you're experiencing a change in your thoughts, behaviors, or moods that is interfering with your work or relationships for longer than 2 weeks, you may have a mental health condition. It can be difficult to tell whether you have a mental health condition if you feel sadness, anxiety, or other intense emotions most of the time. Many mental health conditions first appear early in life, usually before 25 years old. If you are in any doubt about your mental health, reach out to your doctor or nurse, or a mental health professional.

Talk to a doctor if you are experiencing any of the following:

- **A lack of interest in things that you used to enjoy**
- **Crying spells**
- **Lack of motivation**
- **Inability to concentrate**
- **Significant changes in your eating or sleeping patterns**
- **An inability to cope with problems or daily activities**
- **More anxiety than usual over events or situations**
- **Feelings of hopelessness**
- **Sudden changes in your personality for no reason**
- **An inability to stop thinking about certain ideas or memories**
- **Sadness for longer than 2 weeks**
- **Thoughts about suicide (call 911 if you are in immediate danger)**
- **Drug or alcohol abuse or illegal use of prescription drugs**
- **Extreme mood swings**
- **Violent behavior or a lot of anger or hostility**
- **Hearing voices or seeing things that other people don't hear or see**