

Living with mental illness

Our mental health affects our general wellbeing and how we connect with others at home, school, work or socially.

When you struggle with your mental health you may:

- avoid friends and social activities, or have trouble relating to people
- be sad or down, feel tired or have low energy
- feel fear or worry, irritable, angry or have extreme mood changes
- find it hard to focus
- have a tough time coping with problems or stress
- notice changes in appetite, sleep or sex drive
- abuse substances

If you see these signs in yourself or a loved one, talk to a friend, family member or health care provider.

See a health care provider right away if you or a loved one is having suicidal thoughts, seems confused, has delusions, paranoia or hallucinations.

A number of things can contribute to the risk of mental illness, including:

- Abusive relationships
- Early trauma, history of abuse or neglect
- Chemical imbalances in the brain
- Feelings of loneliness or isolation
- Ongoing (chronic) medical issues
- Use of alcohol or drugs
- Family history

Good mental health for children, adolescents, mothers and birthing people

Talk to your pediatrician, OB/GYN or primary care provider if you need help with your mental health or have questions. Many providers now offer in-person and virtual care options.

Through New York State Project TEACH your provider can setup a **FREE** consultation with child and adolescent psychiatrists and reproductive psychiatrists.



If you need help finding a mental health provider, our care managers are here to help.

**Call 1-877-222-1240 (TTY 711)
Monday-Friday 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.**



Facts

- **1 in 5 U.S. adults experience mental illness each year**
- **1 in 6 U.S. youth aged 6-17 experience a mental health disorder each year**
- **50% of all lifetime mental illness begins by age 14, and 75% by age 24**
- **Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death among people aged 10-14**

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)

A nonprofit independent licensee of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association. Our Health Plan complies with federal civil rights laws. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, origin, age, disability, or sex.

Atención: Si habla español, contamos con ayuda gratuita de idiomas disponible para usted. Consulte el documento adjunto para ver las formas en que puede comunicarse con nosotros.

注意：如果您说中文，我们可为您提供免费的语言协助。请参见随附的文件以获取我们的联系方式。

B-8251 rev 3.24 / 18861-24M