

# World Mental Health Day



On the 10th of October every year, World Mental Health Day raises awareness of psychological conditions worldwide and organises efforts to support mental health.

Every one of us can help to make a difference for people who are suffering from mental health issues.

In 2022, the World Federation for Mental Health will focus on making **'Mental Health and wellbeing a global priority'**.

People of all ages face mental health problems, whether in their homes, workplaces or communities. Mental health must be protected as much as possible by individuals and societies.

## What is Mental Health?

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO) **Mental Health** is defined as:

"A state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realise their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community."



## Risk Factors for Mental Health Conditions

Mental health disorders can affect anyone, regardless of gender, age, income, or ethnicity.

A range of factors can contribute to mental health problems, including:

### Continuous social and economic pressure

Having insufficient financial resources or belonging to a disadvantaged or persecuted ethnic group might raise the risk of mental health issues.

### Childhood adversity

Several studies have found that unfavourable childhood events such as child abuse, parental bereavement, parental separation, and parental sickness have a major impact on the mental and physical health of a developing kid.

### Biological factors

According to the NIMH, genetic family history can raise the incidence of mental health issues because some genes and gene variations place a person at greater risk.

The presence of a gene linked to a mental health illness does not ensure the development of the ailment. Similarly, persons who do not have associated genes or a family history of mental disease might nonetheless experience mental health problems. Some conditions like chronic stress or depression can be developed due to health problems such as cancer or diabetes.

## Types of Mental Health disorders

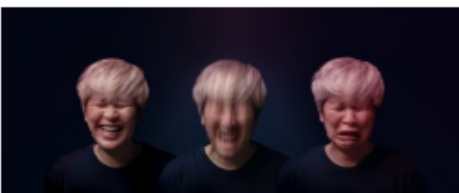
**Anxiety disorders, mood disorders and schizophrenia disorders** are some types of mental illness. According to the Anxiety and Depression Association of America, anxiety disorders are the most common mental illness.



Below are some examples of anxiety disorders:

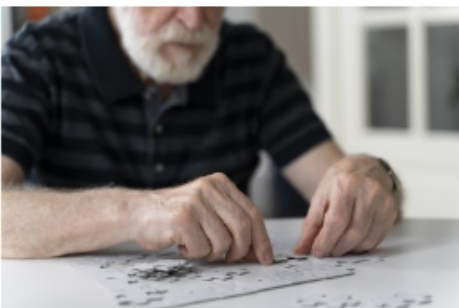
- **Panic disorder:** Experiencing recurring panic attacks at unexpected times. A person with panic disorder may live in fear of the next panic attack.
- **Phobia:** Excessive fear of a specific object, situation, or activity.
- **Social Anxiety Disorder:** Extreme fear of being judged by others in social situations.
- **Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder:** Recurring irrational thoughts that lead you to perform specific, repeated behaviours.
- **Separation Anxiety Disorder:** Fear of being away from home or loved ones.
- **Illness Anxiety Disorder:** Anxiety about your health (formerly called hypochondria).
- **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD):** Anxiety following a traumatic event.

Increased heart rate, rapid breathing, restlessness, trouble concentrating and difficulty falling asleep are the early symptoms of anxiety.



## Mood Disorders

People with these illnesses have major mood fluctuations, which typically include mania, a time of intense energy and excitement, or depression as a result of depressive disorders.



## Schizophrenia Disorders

The word schizophrenia is frequently used to describe a group of illnesses marked by psychotic symptoms and other severe symptoms. These are extremely complicated situations.

According to the National Institute of Mental Health, symptoms of schizophrenia commonly appear between the ages of 16 and 30. The individual will have scattered thinking and may struggle to process information.

Schizophrenia involves both positive and bad symptoms. Delusions, thinking disorders, and hallucinations are examples of positive symptoms, whereas withdrawal, loss of drive, and a flat or unsuitable mood are examples of negative symptoms.

## Ways to Maintain Positive Mental Health Include:

1. Talk about your feelings; it can help to stay in good mental health and can alleviate feelings of anxiety.
2. Regular exercise can boost self-esteem and keeps the brain and other vital organs healthy, which is also a significant benefit to improving mental health.
3. Adopt a healthy lifestyle such as eating a healthy diet, enriched with vegetables and fruits, having at least 7-8 hours of sleep each night and drinking 8 to 10 cups of water per day.
4. Keep in touch with your loved ones and communicate with them.
5. Choose activities that you feel comfortable with, such as yoga.
6. Get help if you need it.
7. Take a break. A few minutes can be enough to de-stress you. Give yourself some 'me' time.



**When individuals are mentally healthy, they can realise their abilities, cope with the normal stresses of life, work productively, and make positive contributions to their community (WHO).**