

May is Mental Health Awareness Month

The emotional pillar of the Wellness Committee joins the national movement of mental health awareness during the month of May. A major challenge in mental health is fighting our [own internalized stigma](#). We would like to join National Alliance on Mental Illnesses (NAMI)'s "Stigma Free Me" campaign for mental health. It is our utmost service to ourselves and our communities that we become a Stigma Free Version of Ourselves in our thinking about mental health challenges and illnesses. Change starts with changing ourselves first. Join us in [signing the Stigma Free Pledge](#).

EVERYONE CAN PLAY A ROLE

- > Use respectful language to talk about mental health conditions.
- > Challenge misconceptions when you see or hear them.
- > See the person, not the condition.
- > Offer support if you think someone is having trouble.

AVOID LABELS SUCH AS THE FOLLOWING:

- > Challenged
- > Crazy
- > Demented
- > Lunatic
- > Normal/not normal
- > Psycho/psychopath
- > Schizo
- > Special
- > Sufferer/victim
- > Wacko

USE RESPECTFUL LANGUAGE THAT DOES NOT DEFINE SOMEONE BY AN ILLNESS:

INSTEAD OF...	TRY...
<ul style="list-style-type: none">She's bipolarSchizophrenicManic depressiveThe mentally illCommitted suicide	<ul style="list-style-type: none">She has bipolar disorder/She's living with bipolar disorderperson with schizophreniaperson with bipolar disorderpeople with a mental illness/mental health conditiondied by suicide

There is power of "We" in the emotional and mental health challenges. Do you know every one in five U.S. adults experience mental illness at some point in their lifespan? We do not have to suffer alone silently and there are support groups: [Support Group Schedule | Nami North Texas](#).

[NAMI Walks](#): NAMI also has an upcoming walk for mental health on May 6th in Frisco.

Knowledge is power. Education and awareness about mental health challenges make a huge difference. We can navigate the symptoms only when we are aware of the illness. There are educational resources for Individuals with Mental Health Challenges. [Individuals Living with Mental Illness | Nami North Texas](#)

Remember, it is not easy to diagnose and treat mental illness. Individuals with mental illness may find solace in denial and delay the treatment. The individual needs to be ready to talk about it and accept the treatment or therapy.

Family members of individuals with mental health challenges need support as well. It is not easy to support a family member with mental health illness. NAMI not only has [free resources for family members](#) but also support groups for family members. [Family Members & Caregivers | Nami North Texas](#)

Credit: National Alliance on Mental Illnesses (NAMI)

Mental Health Care **MATTERS**

Mental health treatment — therapy, medication, self-care — have made recovery a reality for most people experiencing mental illness. Although taking the first steps can be confusing or difficult, it's important to start exploring options.

The average delay between symptom onset and treatment is

11 YEARS

PEOPLE WHO GET TREATMENT IN A GIVEN YEAR

45% of adults with mental illness

66% of adults with serious mental illness

51% of youth (6-17) with a mental health condition

Adults with a mental health diagnosis who received treatment or counseling in the past year

23% of Asian adults

33% of Black adults

34% of Hispanic or Latinx adults

43% of adults who report mixed/multiracial

49% of lesbian, gay and bisexual adults

50% of white adults

*For therapy to work, you have to be open to change. I'm proud to say that I changed.
Therapy saved my life.*

– NAMI Program Leader

Data from CDC, NIMH and other select sources. Find citations for this resource at nami.org/mhstats

NAMI HelpLine
800-950-NAMI (6264)

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You are NOT ALONE

Millions of people are affected by mental illness each year. Across the country, many people just like you work, perform, create, compete, laugh, love and inspire every day.



1 in 5 U.S. adults experience mental illness

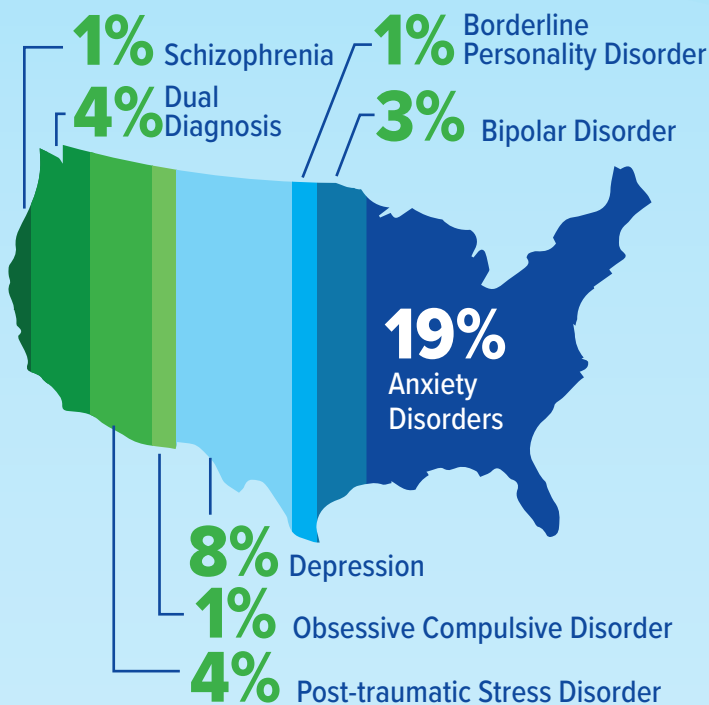
1 in 20

1 in 20 U.S. adults experience serious mental illness

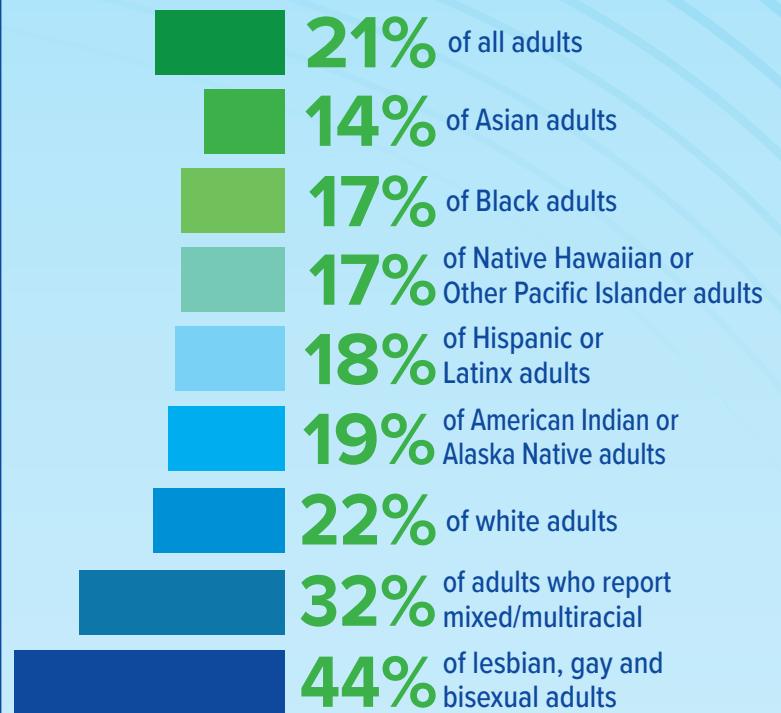
17%

of youth (6-17 years) experience a mental health disorder

12 MONTH PREVALENCE OF COMMON MENTAL ILLNESSES (ALL U.S. ADULTS)



12 MONTH PREVALENCE OF ANY MENTAL ILLNESS (ALL U.S. ADULTS)



WAYS TO REACH OUT AND GET HELP



Talk with a health care professional



Call the NAMI HelpLine at 800-950-NAMI (6264)



Connect with friends and family



Join a support group

Data from CDC, NIMH and other select sources. Find citations for this resource at nami.org/mhstats

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The RIPPLE EFFECT of Mental Illness

Having a mental illness can make it challenging to live everyday life and maintain recovery. Let's look at some of the ways mental illness can impact lives — and how the impact can ripple out.



People with serious mental illness have an increased risk for chronic disease, like diabetes or cancer

PERSON



Rates of cardiometabolic disease are twice as high in adults with serious mental illness



18% of U.S. adults with mental illness also have a substance use disorder



At least **8.4 million** Americans provide care to an adult with an emotional or mental illness

FAMILY



Caregivers spend an average of **32 hours** per week providing unpaid care



21% of people experiencing homelessness also have a serious mental illness

COMMUNITY



37% of people incarcerated in state and federal prison have a diagnosed mental condition



70% of youth in the juvenile justice system have at least one mental health condition



1 in 8 of all visits to U.S. emergency departments are related to mental and substance use disorders



WORLD



Depression is a leading cause of disability worldwide



Depression and anxiety disorders cost the global economy **\$1 trillion** each year in lost productivity

Data from CDC, NIMH and other select sources. Find citations for this resource at nami.org/mhstats

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Common **WARNING SIGNS** of Mental Illness

Diagnosing mental illness isn't a straightforward science. We can't test for it the same way we can test blood sugar levels for diabetes. Each condition has its own set of unique symptoms, though symptoms often overlap. Common signs and/or symptoms can include:

- ! Feeling very sad or withdrawn for more than two weeks
- ! Trying to harm or end one's life or making plans to do so
- ! Severe, out-of-control, risk-taking behavior that causes harm to self or others
- ! Sudden overwhelming fear for no reason, sometimes with a racing heart, physical discomfort or difficulty breathing
- ! Significant weight loss or gain
- ! Seeing, hearing or believing things that aren't real*
- ! Excessive use of alcohol or drugs
- ! Drastic changes in mood, behavior, personality or sleeping habits
- ! Extreme difficulty concentrating or staying still
- ! Intense worries or fears that get in the way of daily activities



*Various communities and backgrounds might view this sign differently based on their beliefs and experiences. Some people within these communities and cultures may not interpret hearing voices as unusual.

WORRIED ABOUT YOURSELF OR SOMEONE YOU CARE ABOUT?

? If you notice any of these symptoms, it's important to ask questions



Try to understand what they're experiencing and how their daily life is impacted



Making this connection is often the first step to getting treatment

KNOWLEDGE IS POWER



Talk with a health care professional



Learn more about mental illness



Take a mental health education class



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50%
of all lifetime mental illness begins by age **14**

75%
by age **24**

Data from CDC, NIMH and other select sources. Find citations for this resource at nami.org/mhstats

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