

Common Mental Illnesses in Adults



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Anxiety disorders

Anxiety disorders are the most common mental illnesses in the United States affecting more than 20 million Americans (approximately one in nine) every year. There are several different types of anxiety disorders including:

Panic disorder

Reoccurring and unexpected panic attacks, fear of going places where one might experience a panic attack.

Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD)

Intruding thoughts or ideas, (obsessions) that are sometimes accompanied by related time consuming rituals (compulsions).

Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD)

Re-experiencing a traumatic event (rape, war, natural disaster, abuse, and serious accidents), avoiding individuals, thoughts or situations associated with the event and excessive emotions.

Generalized anxiety disorder (GAD)

Worrying about real life circumstances that are difficult to control and persist for at least six months. Physical symptoms of the disorder include edginess, fatigue, difficulty concentrating, irritability, muscle tension, and sleep disturbances.

Major Depression

Major depression is a serious medical illness affecting 15 million adults in America. Unlike normal emotional experiences of sadness, loss or passing mood states, major depression is persistent and can significantly interfere with an individual's thoughts, behavior, mood, activity, and physical health. Common symptoms are:

- persistently sad or irritable mood
- pronounced changes in sleep, appetite, and energy
- difficulty thinking, concentrating, and remembering
- physical slowing or agitation
- lack of interest in or pleasure from activities that were once enjoyed
- feelings of guilt, worthlessness, hopelessness, and emptiness
- recurrent thoughts of death or suicide
- persistent physical symptoms that do not respond to treatment, such as headaches, digestive disorders, and chronic pain

Bipolar Disorder

Bipolar disorder is a medical illness that causes extreme shifts in mood, energy and functioning with people experiencing mania and depression. These changes may be subtle or dramatic and typically vary greatly over the course of a person's life as well as among individuals. Over 10 million people in America have bipolar disorder, and the illness affects men and women equally.

Schizophrenia

Schizophrenia is a brain disorder that affects approximately 2.2 million American adults, or 1.1 percent of the population age 18 and older. Schizophrenia interferes with a person's ability to think clearly, to distinguish reality from fantasy, to manage emotions, make decisions, and relate to others. The first signs of schizophrenia typically emerge in the teenage years or early twenties.

See More at: <http://www.namihelps.org/education/adults.html>

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