



Mental Health Facts and Warning Signs

Higher prevalence:

Black American adults are 20 percent more likely to report serious psychological distress than white adults.

More likely to attempt suicide:

Black American teenagers are more likely to attempt suicide than white teenagers (8.3 percent vs. 6.2 percent).

Less likely to receive care:

As of 2015, among those with mental illness, 48 percent of white Americans received the services they need compared to 31 percent of African Americans.



Microaggressions and mental health:

Higher frequencies of racial microaggressions negatively predict mental health. Racial microaggressions are significantly correlated with depression.

Disparities in care quality:

African Americans often receive poorer quality of care and lack access to culturally competent care. Compared with the general population, African Americans are less likely to be offered either evidence-based medication therapy or psychotherapy.

Why Blacks don't always seek mental health care

- Stigma
- Distrust of the health care system
- Lack of diverse providers
- Lack of culturally competent providers
- Lack of insurance, underinsurance

Common Warning Signs of Mental Illness: Adults and Teens

Unlike diabetes or cancer, there is no medical test that can easily and accurately diagnose mental illness. A mental health professional will assess symptoms and develop a treatment plan that can include medication, therapy and/or lifestyle changes. Common signs of mental illness in adults and teens include the following:

- Excessive worrying or fear
- Feeling excessively sad or low
- Confused thinking or problems concentrating and learning
- Extreme mood changes, including uncontrollable “highs” or feelings of euphoria
- Prolonged or strong feelings of irritability or anger
- Avoiding friends and social activities
- Difficulties understanding or relating to other people
- Changes in sleeping habits or feeling tired and low energy
- Changes in eating habits such as increased hunger or lack of appetite
- Changes in sex drive
- Difficulty perceiving reality (delusions or hallucinations, in which a person experiences and senses things that don’t exist in objective reality)
- Inability to perceive changes in one’s own feelings, behavior or personality (lack of insight or anosognosia)
- Overuse of substances like alcohol or drugs
- Multiple physical ailments without obvious causes (such as headaches, stomach aches, vague and ongoing aches and pains)
- Thinking about suicide
- Inability to carry out daily activities or handle daily problems and stress
- An intense fear of weight gain or concern with appearance

Learn more: Watch this **video** for a closer look at the most common warning signs of mental health conditions in teens and young adults.



What you can do

Learning all you can about mental health, risk factors and warning signs is an important first step. Don’t be afraid to reach out if you or someone you know needs help. Some options:

- Connect with Magellan’s Employee Assistance Program for 24/7 support
- Talk with your primary care physician or other healthcare specialist
- Contact the National Alliance on Mental Illness **HelpLine** to find out what services and support are available
- If you or someone else needs immediate help, contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 800-273-8244 or call 911