

know your mind

Because how you think
and feel is health.

Starting the Conversation about Mental Health

Talking to a health care provider about mental health concerns is a natural part of taking care of yourself. While it can be hard to reach out for help, your health care provider can help when you're feeling overwhelmed, stressed, anxious or depressed.

They can:

- Guide you and help you understand what you are going through.
- Reassure you and connect you to support such as counseling, or, if you need it, medication.
- Tell you about lifestyle changes such as sleep and exercise that can help you feel better.

Mental health is an important part of your overall health.

When to Seek Help

You may be experiencing depression or anxiety — the most common mental health concerns — if you notice that you are:

- Sleeping too much or too little.
- Losing your appetite or eating too much.
- Having trouble concentrating.
- Feeling sad or worried most of the time.
- Being more irritable than usual.
- Losing interest in things you usually enjoy.
- Having trouble with your normal routine (getting out of bed, going to work or school, etc.).
- Thinking about harming yourself.

If you have noticed any of these symptoms over the last few weeks or months, you can make an appointment with your health care provider to talk about it.

How to Start

Sometimes it can feel awkward to start a conversation with your health care provider about your mental health. Here are some tips that can help you before, during, and after your appointment.

- If you can, prepare ahead. Take a few minutes to jot down your symptoms and any questions you might have.
- Talk about your thoughts, especially if you are having thoughts that you can't "turn off."
- Talk about your feelings. Do you feel numb? Sad? Irritated by small things? Are you having mood swings?
- Talk about your behavior. Are you having trouble getting out of bed in the morning? Sleeping more or less than usual? Missing work or school? Eating much less or much more than usual? Using drugs or alcohol?
- After your appointment, follow your health care provider's advice. This may include therapy, medicine, lifestyle changes, or a referral to a specialist such as a psychiatrist.
- Follow up with your provider. Let them know if you aren't feeling better. Don't give up: it can take time to find the right treatment plan for you.