



Good Neighbor Script

INSPIRATION FOR LIVING WELL FROM GOOD NEIGHBOR PHARMACY | MAY 2023

Mental Health and Teens: What You Need to Know

You may think your teen's mental health is okay, but some teens with mental health issues may be struggling silently, unsure of how to reach out for help. In 2019, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) declared mental health problems facing teens and children a national emergency that requires action and treatment. And suicide is now a leading cause of death among those aged 15 to 19 years old, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). But younger teens are at risk, too.

Here's how to protect their mental health, recognize the signs and symptoms of mental health issues, and know when it is time to seek professional help.

How to protect your teen's mental health

Helping your teen starts with providing your love and support. These self-care tips can also help your teen protect their mental health.

- **Encourage them to get a good night's sleep.** Depending on their age, teens need between 8 to 11 hours of sleep each night, according to the National Sleep Foundation. Not getting enough sleep has been linked to depression and a higher risk of other mental health problems.
- **Limit usage of electronic devices.** Video games, binge watching TV, and social media can all impact your teen's mental health. According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, people who spend more time on social media than on in-person interactions have an increased risk of anxiety and depression. To limit screen time, try to enforce a no-electronics-in-bedroom rule. You can also set timers on video game consoles.
- **Make sure they get regular exercise.** This helps release endorphins and other feel-good chemicals in the brain. Plan active family outings, like nature hikes. Bonus: Walking in nature may help lower stress levels.
- **Suggest meditation.** You can recommend free meditation apps, such as UCLA Mindful or Smiling Mind. The potential health benefits of meditation include helping to manage anxiety and depression.

Recognizing mental health issues in teens

Getting treatment starts with knowing the signs and symptoms of mental health problems in teens.

According to the AAP, these include:

- Mood swings, anger, irritability, and tearfulness.
- Major changes in daily patterns, including in sleep and eating habits.
- Significant weight loss or weight gain.
- Struggling more than normal in school, for example, as indicated by failing grades in their favorite subject or not doing homework that is easy to complete.
- Losing interest in or quitting activities and things they once enjoyed.
- Withdrawing from friends, family, and social activities.
- Canceling plans with their best friends with little or no explanation.
- Getting a new set of friends who you've never met before or who your teen doesn't want you to meet.
- Ongoing thoughts or worries.
- Refusing to talk about what's bothering them.
- Obsessing over goals; worrying that if they don't achieve these goals, their life will be ruined.
- Signs of drug, alcohol, or other substance use.
- Sexual activity or interest that's new or more intense.
- Signs of self-harm, such as cuts and burns that your teen can't explain well or tries to hide.
- Comments about death or suicide.

When to get professional help

If your teen has symptoms of mental illness that are severe or last longer than two weeks, take them to see their doctor or pediatrician. The doctor will do a medical evaluation to make sure nothing else is going on. If it's a mental health issue, the doctor can refer your teen to a mental health professional to get an accurate diagnosis. Such a professional can start your teen on a treatment plan that's right for them. Mental health treatment often includes a combination of medication and therapy.

What to do in an emergency

If your teen is having thoughts of self-harm or suicide, call, text, or chat the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline right away to get connected to trained mental health counselors. Talking to counselors can help your teen work through their feelings and may help prevent self-harm and suicide.

If your teen is in a mental health crisis, call 911 or take them to the emergency room.

HEALTH & FITNESS

How to Stay Active With Arthritis

Arthritis pain can cause you to move less because the pain in your joints may increase when you start moving. But being stationary isn't a great long-term solution. Staying active is important to your overall health. And staying active can help keep your joints mobile.

Over time, the right kinds of activity can help you manage joint pain by strengthening the surrounding muscles (which provides stability). Movement can also help counteract stiffness, leading to easier movement and less pain.

Here are four tips to help you stay active with arthritis.

Use the right equipment.

The right joint brace or cane can help you maximize comfort and stability. It may take a few tries to find the right one for you.

Warm up your joint before you use it.

One way to warm up your joint is by applying a hot pack to it about 20 minutes before you exercise. Once you're moving, start with slower movements and build to your maximum effort over a few minutes.

See a physical therapist.

They can give you exercises that will help strengthen your muscles. This will help support your joints — especially when you're physically active. Your physical therapist can also advise you on good warm-up activities and help you evaluate the fit of canes and joint braces (if you use them).

Choose a low-impact activity you enjoy.

Good options include walking, cycling, swimming, yoga, and tai chi. Low-impact exercise allows you to stay active and mobilize your joints without putting excessive stress on weight-bearing joints (like your knees).



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MAY RECIPE

Strawberry Chia Power Bowl

Prep Time	Cook Time	Total Time	Serves
12 minutes	0 minutes	12 minutes	2

This plant-based power bowl is a tasty and nourishing way to start your day. It's packed with healthy carbs and fiber from whole-grain oats and naturally low-sugar strawberries. Chia seeds and a dab of almond butter add heart-healthy fats and protein. Top it off with your favorite mix-ins for even more flavor and crunch.

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons chia seeds
- 1/3 cup old-fashioned oats
- 1 cup unsweetened almond milk (or other plant milk)
- 2 tablespoons almond butter
- 1 tablespoon maple syrup (or other sweetener, more or less to taste)
- 2 cups frozen strawberries, partially thawed

Optional toppings:

- Fresh strawberry slices
- Chia seeds
- Unsweetened coconut flakes
- Sliced or chopped almonds (or other chopped nuts)
- Cacao nibs (find these at a natural foods store) or chopped dark chocolate

Tools

- Measuring cup and spoons
- Blender
- Serving bowls and spoons

Instructions

- Place the chia seeds, oats, almond milk, almond butter, and maple syrup in the blender. Blend the ingredients for about 10 seconds to combine.
- Add the strawberries to the blender. NOTE: If the strawberries are frozen solid, thaw them in the microwave for about 45 seconds for easier blending.
- Blend the fruit mixture until smooth.
- Divide the fruit mixture into two bowls. Place the bowls in the refrigerator for 10 minutes. The oats and chia seeds will absorb some of the liquid, and the ingredients will thicken further.
- Add any toppings as desired.
- Store any leftovers in a covered container in the refrigerator for up to two days.

KIDS CAN!

- **Measure the chia seeds and oats.**
- **Add the ingredients to the blender.**
- **Press the blender buttons.**
- **Sprinkle on the toppings.**

ASK A PHARMACIST

Is There a Connection Between Mental and Physical Health?

My experience as a pharmacist over the past 24 years has shown me that there is a clear connection between mental and physical health.

It has been shown and studied that being active and exercising can greatly reduce the risk of depression, anxiety, and overall health concerns. Being active increases our energy levels, leads us to eat healthier, and helps us make better health decisions.

As we stay active, we also surround ourselves with active people who encourage us to make good decisions regarding our health. This cycle, whether we realize it or not, has a positive effect on our thinking and our mindset. Your mindset is the key to having a healthy mental state.

The foods that we eat can also affect our mental state. The best way to feel good is to put the right foods into your body. If you stay active, you are more likely to nurture your body with healthy foods, which can benefit your mental health.

A healthy mental state is a mental state in which we focus on positive thoughts and try not to get caught up in negative self-talk. Negative self-talk may still occur; however, maintaining a healthy mental state makes it easier to move past negative self-talk and replace it with words of affirmation.

If you focus on staying active, eating well, and positive self-talk, your entire mental health will reap the benefits.

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Amit Kakar
Pharmacist
Avalon Pharmacy
Yucca Valley, California

LOCAL LOVE

Elmore Pharmacy

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“Our small community embraces us, and it is our duty to serve them and do everything in our power to help each other and learn and grow together.”

Bianca Bradshaw,
Owner and Pharmacist

What has been the most significant change within your pharmacy over the past five years, and how has it helped you serve your patients better?

The most significant change has been upgrading to PioneerRx. This has streamlined many things about our workflow, and they keep doing updates to make it even better.

What is your favorite thing about being a pharmacist?

My favorite thing about being a pharmacist is being blessed with the opportunity to make a difference in someone's life every day!

What makes your pharmacy unique?

We believe that we are the oldest ongoing pharmacy in California. We have a vast collection of antiques on display. Once, a patient brought in a bottle she found during a remodel of her home. Patients love to bring in bottles to add to our collection.

What do you think your patients love most about your pharmacy?

Our patients love that we know them by name; we know their families and what is going on in their lives.

What are your favorite ways to get involved with your community?

Every year, I sponsor and support local events, including the kids sports programs, Future Farmers of America, and the Red Bluff Round Up. I get to see tons of people I don't see often and enjoy a fun event!

What excites you most about the future of independent pharmacy?

I am excited to see us get back to our professional roots. I think the movement toward point-of-care testing, functional medicine, and nutrient depletion will remind patients that we do more than put pills in a bottle. This will solidify the importance of pharmacists in the minds of the community.

What does *Locally Loved* mean to you?

I know I am *Locally Loved* when a scared patient calls for the third or fourth time to ask the same questions about a new medication. Instead of getting frustrated, I smile — this is a testament to how much a patient trusts that you will be there to help them.