



MEN'S MENTAL HEALTH

November is National Men's Health Awareness month, with one of the important men's health issues being mental health. Mental health struggles in men can go unnoticed, as symptoms can present as anger, aggression, and risky behavior rather than sadness. Bringing awareness to this issue can help break the stigmas and stereotypes surrounding masculinity and encourage men to get help. Per the Anxiety and Depression Association of America (ADAA), 1 in 10 men experience some form of depression or anxiety, but less than half of those men will seek treatment. There are many reasons men might not seek help, including fear of judgment, societal gender expectations, or limited education on available resources. Healthcare providers play a crucial role in opening conversations for men's mental health and advocating for these vulnerable patients.

CURRENT MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENTS

Non-Pharmacologic Treatments	
Treatment	Example
Psychotherapy (Talk Therapy)	Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)
Group Therapy	Men's Support Groups
Lifestyle Changes	Regular exercise and balanced diet Appropriate sleep hygiene
Brain Stimulation Therapies	Electroconvulsive Therapy (ECT), Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS)
Pharmacologic Treatments (focused on depression- not an extensive list)	
Medications recommended for initial treatment in the 2023 American College of Physicians (ACP) Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) Guidelines	Patient Specific Considerations
Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors (SSRIs): citalopram, escitalopram, fluoxetine, fluvoxamine, paroxetine, sertraline	Can cause sexual dysfunction, which could be an important adverse effect to avoid for some men
Serotonin-Norepinephrine Reuptake Inhibitors (SNRIs): duloxetine, venlafaxine	Lower sexual dysfunction, but still an adverse effect to consider for some men
Monocyclic antidepressant: bupropion	Not associated with sexual dysfunction, can be stimulating- insomnia and anxiety can increase
Tetracyclic antidepressant: mirtazapine	Can cause weight gain, which could be undesirable for some men

RESOURCES FOR PATIENTS

There are many resources available for patients, a few of them being:

- [988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline](#): national mental health hotline available 24/7, 365 days a year
 - Free and confidential service providing one-on-one assistance with trained counselors.
 - Available as call, text, or chat and in English, Spanish, and for hard of hearing
- [National Alliance on Mental Illness \(NAMI\)](#): Helpline available M-F 8AM-8PM MST
 - Free and confidential service available nationwide that provides one-on-one support with a trained specialist- for mental health information and resources.

- NOT a crisis line or hot line, NOT a counseling or referral service
- [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration \(SAMHSA\)](#): helpline for mental health and/or substance use disorders available 24/7, 365 days a year.
 - Free and confidential treatment referral and information service
 - Available as a call in English and Spanish
- [SAMHSA FindTreatment.gov](#): website to assist patients in finding nearby treatment facilities.
 - Confidential and anonymous resource to locate treatment for both mental health services and substance use disorders in the US and territories.



ROLE OF PROVIDERS

- Address Stigmas
 - Societal norms that men should be “tough” or showing emotions makes them “weak” or they should be self-sufficient prevents men from seeking help. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) reports in 2022, 41.6% of males with any mental illness received treatment compared to 56.9% of females.
- Recognize signs of mental health issues in men
 - Common symptoms men experience include anger, aggression, increase in alcohol or drug abuse, or engaging in high-risk activities. There can also be a physical manifestation- with some men reporting headache, digestive issues, and pain.
- Normalize asking for help.
 - Stigmas prevent men from seeking help with mental health struggles. Per the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in 2023 suicide rates in men was four times higher than in women. Men are less likely to attempt suicide than women, but more likely to die from suicide due to the tendency to use more lethal methods.
- Care for yourself- “you can’t pour from an empty cup.”
 - Being a provider in the mental health space is hard. Members open up about their grief, trauma, and struggles. SAMHSA reports over half of behavioral health care providers experience symptoms of burnout. Self-care, however that looks for you, is essential to providing quality care to others.

References:

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3. NAMI. Mental Health Treatments | NAMI: National Alliance on Mental Illness. www.nami.org. Published 2024. <https://www.nami.org/About-Mental-Illness/Treatments/>
4. National Institute of Mental Health. Mental Illness. National Institute of Mental Health. Published September 2024. <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics/mental-illness>
5. CDC. Suicide data and statistics. Suicide Prevention. Published March 26, 2025. <https://www.cdc.gov/suicide/facts/data.html>
6. Taking Care: Promoting Well-being for Recovery and Behavioral Health Care Providers | SAMHSA Library. [Samhsa.gov](http://samhsa.gov). Published August 4, 2025. <https://library.samhsa.gov/product/taking-care-promoting-well-being-recovery-and-behavioral-health-care-providers/pep25-08-009>

PREFERRED DRUG LIST UPDATES CAN BE FOUND HERE:

	
ACC-RBHA, DD, ALTCS and DCS CHP	Behavioral Health (Non-Title 19/21)

**** Drugs that are not on the formulary will require a PA (prior authorization) request to be submitted****

Reminder for quicker determinations of a Prior Authorization use the ePA link for Our Providers: Please click [here to initiate an electronic prior authorization \(ePA\)](#) request.

This newsletter is brought to you by the Mercy Care Pharmacy Team. For questions, please email Fanny A Musto (MustoF@mercycares.org), Denise Volkov (VolkovD@mercycares.org) or Trennette Gilbert (gilbert@mercycares.org)