

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

May is Mental Health Awareness month. It is important as healthcare workers to be aware of misconceptions, common signs, and stigma associated with mental health so that we can take better care of our patients, our loved ones, and ourselves.

- 1 in 5 US adults experience symptoms of mental illness each year
- Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death among people aged 10-34



The average delay between onset of mental illness symptoms and treatment is 11 years

COMMON WARNING SIGNS

- feeling sad or withdrawn for more than two weeks
- sudden overwhelming fear for no reason, possibly with physical discomfort and difficulty breathing
- changes in mood, behavior, personality, or sleeping habits
- significant weight loss or gain
- excessive use of alcohol or drugs
- intense worry or fear that gets in the way of daily activities

Invalidating vs. Validating Comments

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| • "Happiness is a choice" | • "I'm sorry you're feeling sad." |
| • "It's all in your head" | • "Your feelings matter" |
| • "Cheer up" | • "I hear you, and I'm here." |
| • "Don't be so negative" | • "That sounds so difficult." |
| • "You're overreacting" | • "This hurts you right now, how can I help?" |

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 800-273-TALK (8255)

Elon Counseling Services: 336-278-7280

Elon Counselor-on-Call: 336-278-2222

National Alliance on Mental Illness Helpline: 800-950-NAMI



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