



## Worried about your mental health?

How to get treatment and support

### Easy read factsheet

This factsheet explains how you can get help for your mental health.

It is for adults in England who are worried about their mental health.

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## How common are mental health problems?



Mental health problems are common. The NHS says that up to 1 in 4 people have had a mental illness.

Mental illness can affect the way you think and act.



Stressful things can lead to you having a mental illness. Like losing a job, relationship problems, the death of a loved one or money problems.



Other things can lead to having a mental illness, like having a family history of it.



When someone has a mental illness, their lives can be affected because of it. Some people might only be affected a little bit. But some people's lives can be affected a lot.

There are lots of different mental illnesses. Anxiety disorders and depression affect a lot of people. But other mental illnesses like schizophrenia, bipolar disorder or personality disorders affect less people.



You can find out more about different types of mental illnesses at Rethink Mental Illness,

Website: [www.rethink.org](http://www.rethink.org)

Telephone: 0121 522 7007

## What are the common signs of mental illness?

A mental illness can feel like different things to different people.



At times you might feel down or anxious. But you might not have a mental health problem.



But if you feel down or anxious a lot of the time you might have a mental illness. It might start to have a bad effect on your life.

The following things could be a sign you have a mental health problem:



- Feeling emotional, like worried or teary.
- Having a low mood or changes in your mood.



- Finding it difficult to focus or remember things.
- Sleeping less or too much.



- Finding it difficult to manage everyday life, like making meals and washing.



- Feeling like you are being threatened in some way, even though there is no proof of it. You might think people are watching you or acting against you.
- Being on your own more and being withdrawn from others.
- Feeling like you want to end your life or people would be better off without you.



- Spending lots of money or having problems dealing with your money.



- Thinking you have special powers or are on a mission.
- Seeing and hearing things that other people can't see or hear.



- Having flashbacks or nightmares after an upsetting event.



These feelings can be scary and hard to deal with. But with the right help, you can get better.

## What help can I get from the NHS?



If you're worried about your mental health, try to get help quickly. The sooner you get help, the quicker you should start to feel better.

### What help can my GP give me?



You can talk to your GP about what help you can get. When you speak to your GP, try to be honest about how you are feeling.

Your GP can:

- Offer you medication to help you.
- Tell you how to get help from NHS talking therapy services.
- Give you advice on things like sleep, keeping fit and what you eat.
- Refer you to an NHS mental health service, like the community mental health team (CMHT).



The CMHT treat people at home, rather than at hospital. They can help you if your mental health is bad and you need extra support or treatment.



You might see someone called a psychiatrist at the CMHT. A psychiatrist is a doctor who knows a lot about mental illnesses. They can help you find the right treatment and support.



### How can I prepare to see a GP?

You can do the following:

- Ask if there is a GP you can see who has an interest in mental health.



- Ask for a double appointment if you need more time to talk.

Normally GP appointments last for 10 minutes.



- Write down how you have felt over time and how it has affected you.



- Think about what you want from the appointment.



- Ask someone you trust to go with you.

## **What are NHS talking therapy services?**

You can get talking therapy from your local NHS talking therapies service.



Talking therapy is when you speak to a therapist about your problems. They are trained in how to help you.

The services give talking therapies that are proven to help people.



They can help by:

- Giving talking therapies like cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), group therapy and counselling.



- Giving online help.





- Treating low to mid-level anxiety and depression and other conditions like this.



The therapy is free and there are services in all areas of England.



You can contact your local service direct to get help.

You can find your local NHS talking therapy service by:

- Searching on this NHS webpage, [www.nhs.uk/mental-health/talking-therapies-medicine-treatments/talking-therapies-and-counselling/nhs-talking-therapies](http://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/talking-therapies-medicine-treatments/talking-therapies-and-counselling/nhs-talking-therapies)
- Calling the NHS on 111.
- Asking your GP.



You can find out more about **talking therapies** at Rethink Mental Illness, Website: [www.rethink.org](http://www.rethink.org) Telephone: 0121 522 7007



## Where can I get urgent help if I'm having a mental health crisis?

A mental health crisis is when your mental health is very bad, and you need help quickly.

You might need support and treatment quickly.

If you need help quickly, you can:

- **Contact your local NHS urgent mental health helpline**

You can find details here:

[www.nhs.uk/service-search/mental-health/find-an-urgent-mental-health-helpline](http://www.nhs.uk/service-search/mental-health/find-an-urgent-mental-health-helpline)

You can phone the NHS on 111 and ask for details.



Your local NHS urgent mental health helpline might get help for you from your local NHS crisis team. The crisis team give help if you need it quickly. You might get help from other services.



- **Ask your GP for an urgent appointment**

GPs keep some appointments free for urgent things.



- **Go to A&E at the hospital**

Mental health doctors and nurses work at A&E. They can talk to you to see how you are feeling and what help you need.

You could be sent to a mental health ward in hospital. Or get help from the crisis team or another service.



- **Call the emergency services on 999 if you cannot go to A&E**

They might get in touch with mental health services like the crisis team or take you to A&E.



- **Call NHS 111**

This is for when you need medical help fast, but it is not an emergency.

Call 111 if you do not know who to call.



- **Text Shout**

Text 'Shout' to 85258 to get a trained person to help you.

For more information, visit [www.giveusashout.org](http://www.giveusashout.org)

## What if I have problems getting help from the NHS?



If you have problems with the NHS, there are things you can do.

You might find it hard to get help. Or not be happy with the help you are getting.



You can:

- Make an appointment with a different GP.
- Change GP surgery.



- Get a community advocate who can help you speak up.
- Get a trusted friend or relative to help you.



- Speak to your local Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS).
- Make a complaint.
- Get an NHS complaints advocate to help you complain.

You can find out more about:

- **Advocacy**
- **Complaints about the NHS or social services**



At Rethink Mental Illness,  
Website: [www.rethink.org](http://www.rethink.org)  
Telephone: 0121 522 7007

## What other help can I get?



There are other places you can get support from.



### How can I get private talking therapy?

Private talking therapy is not done or paid for by the NHS.

You have to pay for it yourself.



Some therapists charge more than others. You can ask about costs. You can agree on a price with your therapist before you start your therapy.



You might get a free first session. Or get it cheaper if you are a student, job seeker, or on a low income.



## What should I look for when choosing a therapist?

It is best to find a therapist who is part of a professional body. This means they meet good standards and must follow important rules.



You can search for private therapists in your area on the following websites:



- **British Association of Counsellors and Psychotherapists**

Website: [www.bacp.co.uk](http://www.bacp.co.uk)



- **UK Council for Psychotherapy**

Website: [www.psychotherapy.org.uk](http://www.psychotherapy.org.uk)



- **Counselling Directory**

Website: [www.counselling-directory.org.uk](http://www.counselling-directory.org.uk)



## How can I get talking therapy from a charity?

You can search online to see if you can find charities that give free or cheap talking therapy.

Ask someone you trust if you need help with this.



You can find out more about **talking therapies** at Rethink Mental Illness,

Website: [www.rethink.org](http://www.rethink.org)

Telephone: 0121 522 7007



## What are complementary and alternative treatments?

Complementary and alternative treatments are not part of normal medical care.

They try to help you relax and help your wellbeing and mental health.



Below are examples:

- Acupuncture
- Aromatherapy
- Herbal medicine
- Homeopathy
- Hypnotherapy
- Light therapy
- Pet therapy
- Massage
- Meditation
- Spiritual or energy healing
- Yoga



You can find out more about **complementary and alternative treatments**

**for mental health** at Rethink Mental Illness,

Website: [www.rethink.org](http://www.rethink.org)

Telephone: 0121 522 7007



### **What can I do to help myself?**

There are things you can do to help yourself.

Everyone is different. You might find something works better for you than others.



You can:

- Learn ways to relax. You might find listening to meditation CDs or music can help.





- Do mindfulness and meditation. You can find out more at **Mindful**, [www.mindful.org](http://www.mindful.org)

- Eat healthy foods and have a good diet. You can find out more at the **NHS**, [www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well](http://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well)



- Keep active. Exercise can help you feel less stressed and make your mood better. You can find out more at:

**We are Undefeatable**,

[www.weareundefeatable.co.uk](http://www.weareundefeatable.co.uk)

**Rethink Mental Illness**,

[www.rethink.org/advice-and-information/living-with-mental-illness/wellbeing-physical-health/physical-activity-and-mental-health](http://www.rethink.org/advice-and-information/living-with-mental-illness/wellbeing-physical-health/physical-activity-and-mental-health)



- Choose healthier drinks and drink lots of them. You can find out more at the **NHS**, [www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/food-guidelines-and-food-labels/water-drinks-nutrition](http://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/food-guidelines-and-food-labels/water-drinks-nutrition)



- Make and keep a routine. Keeping a routine can help keep you busy and focused.



- Have healthy relationships. You can find out more at **The Mental Health Foundation**, [www.mentalhealth.org.uk/explore-mental-health/publications/guide-investing-your-relationships](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/explore-mental-health/publications/guide-investing-your-relationships)



- Get enough sleep. Not sleeping well or enough can affect your mental health. You can find out more at **Rethink Mental Illness**, [www.rethink.org/advice-and-information/living-with-mental-illness/wellbeing-physical-health/how-can-i-improve-my-sleep](http://www.rethink.org/advice-and-information/living-with-mental-illness/wellbeing-physical-health/how-can-i-improve-my-sleep)



- Don't drink alcohol or drink within healthy limits. You can find out more at **Rethink Mental Illness**, [www.rethink.org/advice-and-information/about-mental-illness/learn-more-about-conditions/drugs-alcohol-and-mental-health](http://www.rethink.org/advice-and-information/about-mental-illness/learn-more-about-conditions/drugs-alcohol-and-mental-health)



- Don't smoke or cut down how much you smoke. You can find out more at **Rethink Mental Illness**, [www.rethink.org/advice-and-information/living-with-mental-illness/wellbeing-physical-health/smoking-and-mental-health](http://www.rethink.org/advice-and-information/living-with-mental-illness/wellbeing-physical-health/smoking-and-mental-health)



- Keep a diary of how you feel each day. This might help you understand your feelings and what makes you better or worse. You can write on paper or use online resources like **MoodPanda**, [www.moodpanda.com](http://www.moodpanda.com)

You can find out more about physical health and changes in your life at

**Rethink Mental Illness**, [www.rethink.org/advice-and-information/living-with-mental-illness/wellbeing-physical-health](http://www.rethink.org/advice-and-information/living-with-mental-illness/wellbeing-physical-health)



**Mental Health Foundation**, [www.mentalhealth.org.uk/explore-mental-health/a-z-topics/physical-health-and-mental-health](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/explore-mental-health/a-z-topics/physical-health-and-mental-health)

### **Can I get self-help online?**

There are websites that you can use to manage your mental health.





Below are some websites that you might find helpful:

- **NHS Every Mind Matters**  
Website: [www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters](http://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters)
- **Mood Gym**  
Website: [www.moodgym.com.au](http://www.moodgym.com.au)



- **Live life to the Full**  
[www.lltff.com](http://www.lltff.com)



- **Psychology Tools**  
[www.psychologytools.com](http://www.psychologytools.com)



There are also websites that explain how you can use CBT techniques to improve and manage your mental health. CBT means cognitive behavioural therapy:

- **Get Self Help**  
[www.getselfhelp.co.uk](http://www.getselfhelp.co.uk)

# ieso

- **ieso**

[www.iesohealth.com](http://www.iesohealth.com)

This is online for some NHS Trusts



## How can I get emotional support?

Talking about your feelings can help your mental health. You can talk to loved ones you trust or call the following helplines.



SAMARITANS

### Samaritans

Telephone: 116123

Email: [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)

Website: [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)



### Sane

Telephone: 0300 304 7000

Textcare, [www.sane.org.uk/how-we-help/emotional-support/textcare](http://www.sane.org.uk/how-we-help/emotional-support/textcare)

Support Forum, [www.sane.org.uk/how-we-help/sane-community/support-forum](http://www.sane.org.uk/how-we-help/sane-community/support-forum)

Website: [www.sane.org.uk](http://www.sane.org.uk)



### Support Line

Telephone: 01708 765200

E-mail: [info@supportline.org.uk](mailto:info@supportline.org.uk)

Website: [www.supportline.org.uk](http://www.supportline.org.uk)



## Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM)

Telephone: 0800 58 58 58

Webchat: through the website

Website: [www.thecalmzone.net](http://www.thecalmzone.net)



## Papyrus UK

Telephone: 0800 068 41 41

Text: 07786 209697

Email: [pat@papyrus-uk.org](mailto:pat@papyrus-uk.org)

Website: [www.papyrus-uk.org](http://www.papyrus-uk.org)



## The Mix - support for under 25-year-olds

Telephone: 0808 808 4994

Email: [www.themix.org.uk/get-support/speak-to-our-team/email-us](http://www.themix.org.uk/get-support/speak-to-our-team/email-us)

Website: [www.themix.org.uk](http://www.themix.org.uk)



## What are support groups?

Support groups are where people with the same problems can talk to and support each other.



You can find local mental health support groups through **Rethink Mental Illness**,

[www.rethink.org/help-in-your-area/support-groups](http://www.rethink.org/help-in-your-area/support-groups) and **Mind**,

[www.mind.org.uk/about-us/local-minds](http://www.mind.org.uk/about-us/local-minds)

[www.mind.org.uk/about-us/local-minds](http://www.mind.org.uk/about-us/local-minds)



There are also online support services:

- **Clic**  
Website: <https://clic-uk.org>



- **Side by Side**  
Website: [sidebyside.mind.org.uk/](http://sidebyside.mind.org.uk/)



- **7 Cups**  
Website: [www.7cups.com](http://www.7cups.com)



- **Sane**  
Website: [www.sane.org.uk/how-we-help/sane-community/support-forum](http://www.sane.org.uk/how-we-help/sane-community/support-forum)



- **Together All**  
Website: [www.togetherall.com/en-gb](http://www.togetherall.com/en-gb)

## Can people recover from mental illness?



Recovery can mean different things to different people. But with support and treatment, you can start to get better.



If you are worried about your mental health, you can think about the options in this factsheet. The services and organisations are there to help and support you.



You can find out more about **recovery** at Rethink Mental Illness,  
Website: [www.rethink.org](http://www.rethink.org)  
Telephone: 0121 522 7007



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Last updated September 2022  
Next update September 2025  
Version number 1

A fully referenced, plain English version of this factsheet can be found at: [www.rethink.org](http://www.rethink.org)

## Rethink Mental Illness Advice Service

**Phone 0808 801 0525**  
**Monday to Friday, 9:30am to 4pm**  
**(excluding bank holidays)**

**Email [advice@rethink.org](mailto:advice@rethink.org)**

### Did this help?

We'd love to know if this information helped you.

**Drop us a line at:** [feedback@rethink.org](mailto:feedback@rethink.org)

### Or write to us at Rethink Mental Illness:

RAIS  
PO BOX 17106  
Birmingham B9 9LL

**Or call us on** 0808 801 0525

We're open 9:30am to 4pm  
Monday to Friday (excluding bank holidays)



Leading the way to a better quality of life for everyone affected by severe mental illness.

For further information  
On Rethink Mental Illness  
Phone 0121 522 7007  
Email [info@rethink.org](mailto:info@rethink.org)



[Facebook.com/rethinkcharity](https://www.facebook.com/rethinkcharity)



[Twitter.com/rethink\\_](https://twitter.com/rethink_)



[www.rethink.org](http://www.rethink.org)



## Patient Information Forum

### Need more help?

Go to [www.rethink.org](http://www.rethink.org) for information on symptoms, treatments, money and benefits and your rights.

### Don't have access to the web?

Call us on 0121 522 7007. We are open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm, and we will send you the information you need in the post.

### Need to talk to an adviser?

If you need practical advice, call us on 0808 801 0525 between 9:30am to 4pm, Monday to Friday. Our specialist advisers can help you with queries like how to apply for benefits, get access to care or make complaints.

### Can you help us to keep going?

We can only help people because of donations from people like you. If you can donate, please go to [www.rethink.org/donate](http://www.rethink.org/donate) or call 0121 522 7007 to make a gift. We are very grateful for all our donor's generous support.



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