

FALL 2021

Healthy Together

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How to Talk With Your Doctor About Mental Health

When your body is not well, you go to the doctor. But what if it is your mind that is not feeling right? Your health care provider should hear these concerns, too.

If you are feeling depressed or anxious, or are having other trouble, do not be afraid to speak up. Mental health problems are treatable. Talking with a professional could be the first step in feeling better.

Make an Appointment ASAP

Start with your primary care provider. Many health problems can cause mental health symptoms. Your provider can do an exam to see if this is what is happening. Your provider may then refer you to a mental health professional.

In an urgent situation, such as if you are thinking of harming yourself, go to the emergency room right away.

Be Honest and Open

You may feel embarrassed. But do not let this keep you from asking for help. Close to 1 in 5 Americans has a mental illness. So, what you are going through is not uncommon. For your provider to give you the right diagnosis and treatment, they need to know what is going on.

Get Specific About Symptoms

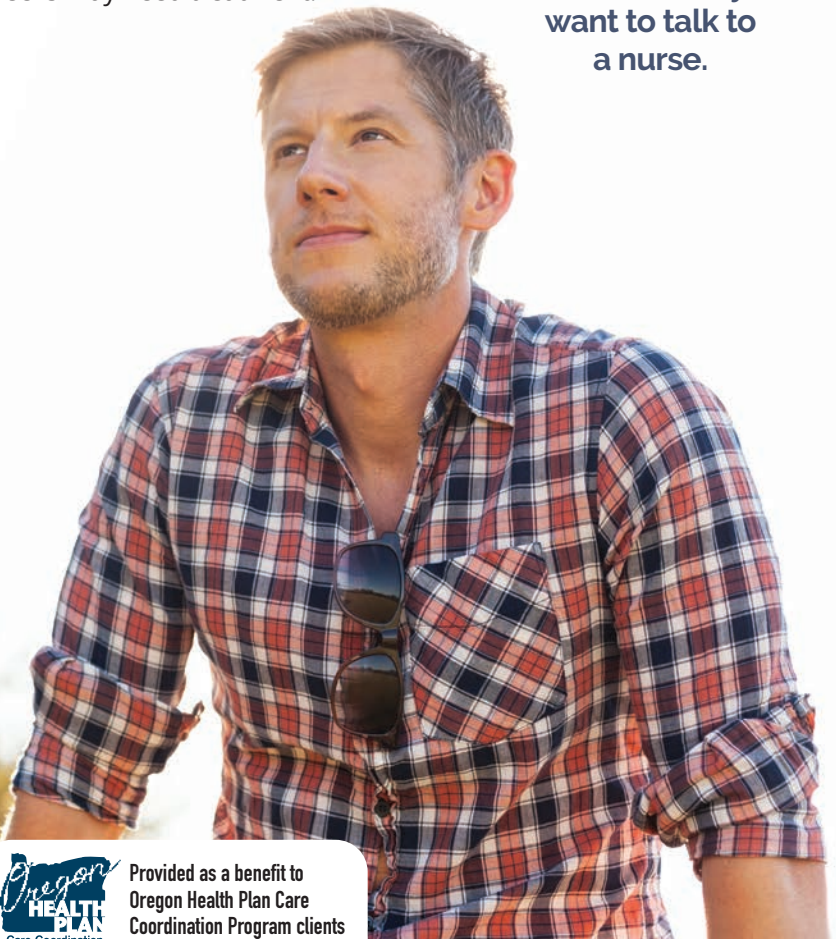
Tell your provider what symptoms you are having, even if you are not sure something is related to mental health. Try to include when the symptom started, how often it occurs, how severe it is and if you have had it before.

Also tell your provider about any big life changes. It is normal to feel sad after the death of a loved one, for example. But depression that lasts for weeks may need treatment.

Ask Questions

A conversation with your provider should be a two-way street. Speak up if you have questions about what they are saying to you.

**We are here to help
any day, any time.
24/7 NURSE ADVICE LINE
1-800-562-4620
Call ANY TIME you
want to talk to
a nurse.**



COVID-19 Corner

Weighing the Vaccine Pros and Cons

Have you been putting off getting a COVID-19 vaccine because you heard it is unsafe? Do you have other concerns based on news stories or social media? Here are some of the reasons people say they are still thinking about it, and the facts to consider.

“I saw a news story about the vaccine and myocarditis.”

You may have read or heard that the vaccine causes an inflammation of the heart called myocarditis. But the

vaccine has not been proven to cause myocarditis. The rate of myocarditis cases after vaccination is similar to the rate of cases in the general population. The cases that have occurred are usually mild and get better. On the other hand, COVID-19 infection causes cardiomyopathy, a very serious, lifelong complication of the infection. Learn more at www.cdc.gov/coronavirus. Search for “myocarditis.”

“I have an underlying condition.”

People with chronic lung disease, cancer, diabetes or another condition may be worried about vaccine safety. But having one of these conditions puts you at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19. So, the vaccine gives you important protection. Learn more at www.cdc.gov/coronavirus. Search for “underlying conditions.”

“Life is back to normal; the danger has passed.”

Schools and businesses are reopening thanks to the vaccine. Vaccinated people can also safely travel, socialize and do other activities. But for those who have not gotten their shots, reopening comes with a higher chance of exposure to COVID-19. This includes new, more contagious variants.

Learn more at www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/.

Note: This information about the COVID-19 vaccine was current at time of publication. For the most up-to-date information and more answers to your questions, visit www.cdc.gov/coronavirus.

Have More Questions About the COVID-19 Vaccine? Just Ask!

It is OK to have questions about the vaccine. There is a lot of information out there — and plenty of misinformation, too. But do not let that stop you from making this very personal and important decision. After all, there are also answers to be found!

Just be sure to get information from a reliable, science-based source. One like the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Website at www.cdc.gov/coronavirus. Your health care provider is another good source of advice about what is best for you.



+ health briefs

Ready for a Return to Normal?

Schedule your no-cost COVID-19 vaccine if you have not already. To register and check current eligibility, just go to getvaccinated.oregon.gov. Not only is it safe, the vaccine is the best way to get back to living your life more fully.



Prepare for Flu Season

It is time for your annual flu shot. Most people ages 6 months and older should get one now. The cost of a flu shot is covered by your plan.



A Shot to Stop Shingles

If you are age 50 or older, ask your provider about the shingles vaccine, even if you have had shingles before.



Prevent Pneumonia

The CDC suggests a pneumococcal vaccine for many people. This includes those who are younger than age 2 and ages 65 or older. People of any age with certain medical issues and adult smokers should also get this shot. There are 2 versions available. Ask your provider if you need one this year.



YOUR SYMPTOM GUIDE:

Flu, Coronavirus, Cold or Allergies?

WHETHER YOU ARE SNEEZING, COUGHING OR FEELING ACHY, SOMETIMES IT IS DIFFICULT TO KNOW WHAT IS CAUSING YOUR SYMPTOMS. Is it just a pesky cold or allergies, so life can carry on? Or could it be the flu or coronavirus and you should stay home? This chart will help you tell the difference.



FIGHTING THE FLU

With similar symptoms that can be mild to severe, it is easy to mistake the flu for COVID-19. One of the tell-tale signs of the flu is that it tends to come on fast.



COPING WITH CORONAVIRUS

Thinking you have COVID-19 can be scary. And while there is cause for concern, most cases are mild and do not require any special treatment.



CATCHING A COLD

Compared with the flu and COVID-19, the common cold usually does not cause a fever and has milder symptoms.



SURVIVING SEASONAL ALLERGIES

Unlike the flu, coronavirus and common cold, symptoms for seasonal allergies do not include body aches. With allergies, you also will not have a fever.

	FIGHTING THE FLU	COPING WITH CORONAVIRUS	CATCHING A COLD	SURVIVING SEASONAL ALLERGIES
ONSET	Symptoms develop suddenly.	Symptoms may appear 2 to 14 days after exposure to the virus.	Symptoms tend to develop slowly.	Symptoms come and go with the seasons (usually in spring, late summer and fall).
DURATION	Less than 2 weeks.	A few days to a week (for most people).	About 7 to 10 days.	Several weeks.
SYMPTOMS	Coughing, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, headaches, body aches, fatigue, fever or chills, vomiting, diarrhea (more common in children).	Fever or chills, coughing, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, body aches, headaches, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea.	Runny nose, sneezing, sore throat, coughing, slight body aches, headaches.	Runny or stuffy nose; sneezing; coughing; itching in the eyes, nose, mouth and throat; headaches; watery eyes; pressure in the nose and cheeks; difficulty smelling.
CARE TIPS	Stay at home, rest in bed, drink lots of fluids and avoid other people. If you are very sick or have a high risk for flu complications, your provider may prescribe medication to help ease your symptoms.	Contact your provider right away if you think you were exposed to the coronavirus. If symptoms are mild, stay home in a room or area away from other people. Rest and drink lots of fluids. See if over-the-counter (OTC) medicines like acetaminophen help you feel better.	Drink lots of fluids and get plenty of rest. Taking OTC medicines can help manage your symptoms, too.	Try to avoid the allergens that trigger your symptoms. If needed, use an OTC nasal spray or other allergy medicine.



Oregon Health Plan Care Coordination
 P.O. Box 2480
 Tualatin, OR 97062

Ready to quit tobacco?

Call a Quit Coach 24 hours
 a day, 7 days a week,
 in 170+ languages:

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1-855-DÉJELO-YA (1-855-335-3569)

Online:

www.quitnow.net/oregon

Call **1-800-562-4620** to discuss any of the topics in this newsletter or any other health issues. Visit our Website at **www.OHPCC.org**.

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Spread the Word: Mammograms Save Lives

Breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death for women in the U.S. The good news is that a mammogram can help detect this threat at an earlier, more treatable stage. The bad news? Many women have been avoiding this screening because of coronavirus. Now that life is starting to get back to normal, it is time to stop putting off this important test.

Experts have different guidance for when women should get screened:

- The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force says women ages 50 to 74 should get screened every 2 years.

- The American Cancer Society recommends that women ages 45 to 54 have a yearly mammogram. Women ages 55 and older can choose to keep this schedule or switch to being screened every 2 years.

To decide which schedule to follow, talk with your provider about your breast cancer risk factors. Together, you can decide when to start getting mammograms and how often you should get screened.

A Note About Mammograms and COVID-19 Vaccines

When is the one time it is OK to wait for your mammogram? When you have recently received the COVID-19 vaccine. Some people develop swollen lymph nodes in their necks or armpits post-shot. It is a normal reaction, but can be mistaken for a sign of breast cancer. So, wait 1 month after your shot to get this test.

