

Mental Illness Awareness Week

During **Mental Illness Awareness Week** on Oct. 1-7, 2017, NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) and participants across the country are raising awareness of mental illness. Each year we fight stigma, provide support, educate the public and advocate for equal care.

Each illness has its own symptoms, but common signs of mental illness in adults and adolescents can include the following:

- Excessive worrying or fear
- Feeling excessively sad or low
- Confused thinking or problems concentrating and learning
- Extreme mood changes, including uncontrollable “highs” or feelings of euphoria
- Prolonged or strong feelings of irritability or anger
- Avoiding friends and social activities
- Difficulties understanding or relating to other people
- Changes in sleeping habits or feeling tired and low energy
- Changes in eating habits such as increased hunger or lack of appetite
- Changes in sex drive
- Difficulty perceiving reality (delusions or hallucinations, in which a person experiences and senses things that don't exist in objective reality)
- Inability to perceive changes in one's own feelings, behavior or personality (“lack of insight” or anosognosia)
- Abuse of substances like alcohol or drugs
- Multiple physical ailments without obvious causes (such as headaches, stomach aches, vague and ongoing “aches and pains”)
- Thinking about suicide
- Inability to carry out daily activities or handle daily problems and stress
- An intense fear of weight gain or concern with appearance (mostly in adolescents)



Information courtesy of: NAMI. (2017) Retrieved from <https://www.nami.org/Get-Involved/Awareness-Events/Mental-Illness-Awareness-Week>

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Did you know breast cancer can affect both men and women? The median age of breast cancer diagnosis for men in the U.S. is 68. However, race and ethnicity affect age of cancer diagnosis. For example, black men tend to be diagnosed at a younger age than white men. The median age at diagnosis for black men is 65, compared to 68 for white men.



Warning Signs of Breast Cancer in Men

The most common sign of breast cancer in men is a painless lump or thickening in the breast or chest area. However, any change in the breast or nipple can be a warning sign of breast cancer in men including :

- Lump, hard knot or thickening in the breast, chest or underarm area (usually painless, but may be tender)
- Change in the size or shape of the breast
- Dimpling, puckering or redness of the skin of the breast
- Itchy, scaly sore or rash on the nipple
- Pulling in of the nipple (inverted nipple) or other parts of the breast
- Nipple discharge (rare)

These symptoms may also be signs of a benign breast condition.

As men tend to have much less breast tissue compared to women, some of these signs can be easier to notice in men than in women. Some men may be embarrassed about a change in their breast or chest area and put off seeing a health care provider. This may result in a delay in diagnosis. Survival is highest when breast cancer is found early and treated. If you notice any of these signs or other changes in your breast, chest area or nipple, **see a healthcare provider right away.**

Signs and Symptoms of Possible Breast Cancer in Women:

The warning signs of breast cancer are not the same for all women. The most common signs are a change in the look or feel of the breast, a change in the look or feel of the nipple and nipple discharge.

See a health care provider if you:

- Find a new lump (or any change) that feels different from the rest of your breast
- Find a new lump (or any change) that feels different from your other breast
- Feel something that's different from what you felt before
- It's best to see a provider if you are unsure about a new lump (or any change)
- Nipple discharge:
 - leaking from your nipple (nipple discharge) can be troubling, but it's rarely a sign of breast cancer
 - Discharge can be your body's natural reaction when the nipple is squeezed
 - Signs of a more serious condition (such as breast cancer) include discharge that:
 - Occurs without squeezing the nipple
 - Occurs in only one breast
 - Is bloody or clear (not milky)
 - Nipple discharge can also be caused by an infection or other condition that needs treatment
 - **If you have any nipple discharge, see a health care provider.**

Information courtesy of: Komen Foundation. (2017). Retrieved from <http://www5.komen.org/BreastCancer/WarningSigns.html>