



KNOW THE WARNING SIGNS OF PEOPLE STRUGGLING WITH MENTAL HEALTH

During the COVID-19 pandemic, there seems to be an increase in depression, anxiety, suicide, and even domestic violence.

People aren't as socially connected, so it can be challenging to recognize when family, friends, or co-workers are at risk for mental health conditions and violence.

Learn the warning signs of mental health and domestic violence, so you can connect with or alert the right workplace resources for help.

Anxiety¹

Emotional signs:

- Irrational or excessive worry
- Anticipating the worst
- Feelings of dread and danger
- Feeling tense and on edge
- Irritability
- Inability to focus or concentrate

Physical signs:

- Dizziness
- Upset stomach
- Pounding/racing heart
- Shortness of breath
- Insomnia
- Trembling or muscle twitching
- Headaches
- Sweating

Depression²

- **Feelings of helplessness/hopelessness** and feeling that things will not get better
- **Changes in sleep pattern** – Too much or too little sleep
- **Irritability** – Frustration; tolerance is low
- **Weight change** – Significant weight loss or gain
- **Inability to feel pleasure or joy** in activities you once enjoyed
- **Loss of energy** – Fatigue and sluggishness; all activity is draining
- **Self-loathing** – Feelings of worthlessness
- **Difficulty concentrating** – Inability to focus and make decisions
- **Physical aches and pains** – Unexplained pain, such as in the back, headaches, and stomach
- **Reckless behavior** – Excessive alcohol or drug use, gambling, or reckless driving

Suicide³

- Feelings of hopelessness
- Expressing feelings of being a burden
- Expressing feelings of significant isolation and disconnect from family and friends
- Talking or posting about suicide
- Expressing unbearable anxiety or emotional pain
- Increase in anger, irritability leading to aggressive behavior
- Changes in sleep patterns
- Feelings of being trapped
- Access to lethal means

Domestic violence and considerations during social distancing^{4,5}

- Constantly worried about angering their partner
- Partner insults them in front of other people
- They make excuses for their partner's behavior
- Their partner is extremely possessive and jealous
- They have unexplained bruises, scratches, or cuts
- They stop connecting with family and friends
- They exhibit anxiety, depression, or display changes in personality

In times of social distancing, domestic violence offenders may:

- Withhold things like hand sanitizer
- Isolate their partner more than is required
- Share misinformation to create more fear for their partner

Considerations for those abused:

- Shelters may be more full
- Travel restrictions may negatively impact a safety plan
- Those with underlying chronic conditions may be at more risk in public places like shelters

Create a safety plan that you can execute:

- Stay with family or friends
- If you're remaining in the home with your partner, maintain connection to family and friends
- Keep the national domestic abuse hotline available

If you or someone you know needs help, call:

National Domestic Violence Hotline:
1-800-799-7233

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:
1-800-273-8255

1 <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/anxiety/anxiety-disorders-and-anxiety-attacks.htm>

2 <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/depression/depression-symptoms-and-warning-signs.htm>

3 Klonsky, D.E., Saffer, B.Y., and Bryan, C.J., "Ideation-to-action theories of suicide: a conceptual and empirical update," *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 22: 38-43, 2018

4 <https://people.com/crime/domestic-violence-warning-signs-someone-being-abused/>

5 <https://www.underlaw.com/news/domestic-violence-and-social-distancing.asp>

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