



6. These symptoms call for consultation with a healthcare professional:

- Sadness that has lasted longer than two weeks
- Consistent worries about issues such as money, family, and health
- Consistent trouble sleeping or concentrating
- Frequent trouble remembering things or feeling confused in familiar places
- Have more than one alcoholic drink a day or take more medication than prescribed

7. Older adults can be helped with the same success as younger people.

- 80% of older adults recovered from depression after receiving treatment that included both psychotherapy and anti-depressant medication.

8. Our healthcare system is not adequately helping older adults with mental disorders.

- Medicare covers 80% of the cost of physical illness, but only 50% of the cost of treating a mental health problem. Included in the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act (MIPPA), passed in 2008, was a provision to achieve equity for mental health services in Medicare by reducing the co-pay for mental health services from 50% to 20%, the same as for most other health services, incrementally over six years.
- Researchers estimate that up to 63% of older adults with a mental disorder do not receive the services they need.
- 75% of those who commit suicide have visited a primary care physician within a month of their suicide.

9. Misdiagnosis and avoidance are common.

- Primary care physicians fail to diagnose depression 50% of the time.
- Only half of older adults who discuss specific mental health problems with a physician receive any treatment.

10. Older adults have specific mental health care needs.

- Changing bodies and chemistry, changes in family and friendships and changes in living situations can all impact mental health and need to be considered in treatment.
- Sometimes helping solve basic problems, like transportation, can lower stress, improve community connections, and improve outlook and mood.
- If older adults take many medications for illnesses, drug interactions and side effects can change mood and behavior.