



WASHINGTON HEALTH SYSTEM

Center for Mental Health and Wellbeing

## MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



### What Causes A Mental Disorder To Develop?

Mental disorders are conditions that affect the mind and, subsequently, your thoughts, feelings, mood, and behavior. These can take effect in a variety of manners, and they may be persistent throughout your entire life or occasional. Having a mental disorder is not uncommon, and it is becoming increasingly easier to treat psychiatric disorders, so they do not affect your day-to-day activities. That said, mental disorders should be taken as seriously as physical disorders. As such, it is necessary to seek out professional medical help if you suspect you or someone you care about has a mental disorder. Several components of an individual can factor into whether or not they develop a mental disorder.

#### Inherited Genetics

Inherited genetics play a critical part of your development as a person in general. Many physical features, as well as certain health conditions, can be inherited from parents or grandparents. Cancer, for instance, is something commonly passed down through genetics, and individuals often opt for cancer screenings whenever possible to ensure they have not inherited their family's likelihood for cancer. Much like in the instance of cancer, particular mental disorders can be passed down through genes. While genetics are not a singular component, that is, they are frequently not the only reason a mental disorder develops, in determining a person's mental health, they do have a significant role.

#### Brain Chemistry

It can be difficult for people to wrap their heads around the fact mental disorders can be a result of the brain's chemistry. It is because of this that so many individuals misunderstand the use of medicine to treat mental disorders. However, mental disorders, like any physical disorder, can be helped by medicine. In the same way you may want to have medical treatment to treat the flu or to ease a headache, you can also use medicine to change your brain chemistry and overcome mental illness. An imbalance of the brain's chemistry can lead to many different kinds of mental disorders, including depression. While chemistry, like genetics, is typically not the sole source of mental disorder in a patient, it can be one of the largest contributors.

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July  
2022



#### **Month:**

Minority Mental Health  
Awareness Month

#### **Day:**

World Day Against  
Trafficking Persons  
(Jul. 30)

To learn more visit:

<https://sacwellness.com/mental-health-awareness-calendar/?nowprocket=1>

## Environmental Factors

The environment we grow up in has a huge impact on every aspect of our lives. It can help to foster our personalities as well as determine our likes and dislikes. In this same fashion, environmental factors can also cause mental disorders. Sometimes this can be in an obvious manner, such as when someone grows up in a home filled with abuse, or it can manifest in a much subtler manner, such as a person who has just moved or started a new job. Many individuals do not realize just how profoundly their environment affects their mental development until they are diagnosed with a mental disorder and seek out the help of a mental health professional.

## Medical Conditions

Medical conditions can contribute to mental disorders. When someone struggles with a chronic condition, it can impact their mental health and create additional problems. Complications such as depression or anxiety are more common than many individuals are ready to admit. Even something like diabetes can lead to mental disorder. There are even certain infections, such as pediatric autoimmune neuropsychiatric disorder, that can lead to the development of obsessive-compulsive disorder as well as other mental illnesses. In rare cases, individuals can develop mental disorders as a result of brain injury or brain damage. However, those are not the only sources. In fact, there is an array of substance abuse issues and complications that can lead to mental disorders over continued use.

## Traumatic Life Events

A life event can have more of a lasting impact than most individuals realize. In fact, death and divorce are among the top most stressful events an individual can undergo, and it contributes to a cumulative stress level that can cause anxiety, depression, and other conditions. Individuals who are subject to incredibly traumatic life events such as war can develop a condition called post-traumatic stress disorder, and new mothers can be victim to postpartum depression. Regardless of the change you may be experiencing, stress, and mental disorders as a result, can follow, and it is important to understand and acknowledge when a life event may be impacting your mental health.

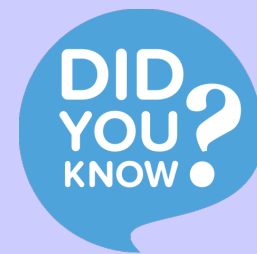
## Traumatic Brain Injury

A traumatic brain injury can sometimes lead to the development of mental health disorders. When an individual has suffered a traumatic brain injury, they might experience numerous symptoms related to their emotional health, cognition, and physical health. One study conducted by Danish scientists in 2013 found individuals with traumatic brain injuries had a four times higher likelihood of developing mental illnesses than those without. This included concussions, the mildest traumatic brain injury.

## Past Mental Illness

Past mental illness can have an impact on an individual's chances of developing mental illness in the future. A few different factors are at play here. One is that patients may be more predisposed toward certain chemical imbalances that lead to mental health symptoms.

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## MENTAL HEALTH MYTH

**Myth:** Children don't experience mental problems.

**Fact:** Even very young children may show early warning signs of mental health concerns. These mental health problems are often clinically diagnosable and can be a product of the interaction of biological, psychological, and social factors.

Half of all mental health disorders show first signs before a person turns 14 years old, and three-quarters of mental health disorders begin before age 24.

Unfortunately, only half of children and adolescents with diagnosable mental health problems receive the treatment they need. Early mental health support can help a child before problems interfere with other developmental needs.

To read the full article visit: [Mental Health Myths and Facts | MentalHealth.gov](#)

Certain mental illnesses, like bipolar disorder and schizophrenia, tend to be caused by ongoing chemical imbalances. They require lifelong treatment, typically with a combination of medication and therapy. If patients stop taking the medication, they might experience a recurrence in their symptoms that feels like a new mental illness.

Another factor is mental illness causes distorted patterns of thinking and cognition. If individuals have had trouble regulating their thoughts and emotions in the past, they might continue to experience those problems in the future. One of the most helpful things for individuals with emotional regulation issues is cognitive behavioral therapy, which aims to help patients identify unhealthy patterns and break them. It's also possible individuals might experience mental health symptoms of a past disorder even after months or years in recovery.

### Lack Of Healthy Relationships

A lack of healthy relationships can have a serious effect on the human psyche. As with other social and environmental factors, there are several layers to this. When dealing with normal stress, it's vital for individuals to have those in their life who can support them. A lack of a support system can lead to feelings of isolation, anxiety, despair, hopelessness, and anger. Individuals need to be able to lean on others. For those who are already predisposed toward mental illness, lacking a support system can make symptoms much worse.

### Prenatal Brain Damage

There have been hundreds of studies on the different ways prenatal factors can influence a baby's development. Exposure to certain substances and circumstances can increase a child's chances of physical birth defects, disabilities, cognitive development issues, other neurological development problems, or multiple different types of illness. Prenatal brain damage has also been linked to the development of mental illness. There have been studies showing increased levels of inflammation and infections during pregnancy can increase a child's risk of neurological impairment. More definitive research is necessary regarding how these factors influence the development of different mental illnesses.

### Poor Nutrition

Poor nutrition can increase an individual's chances of developing a mental illness. In some cases, this may be due to the stress of poverty and going hungry. However, some individuals might be malnourished and experience mental health symptoms even while having adequate access to food. A variety of vitamin imbalances can cause depression, fatigue, pain, anxiety, and even psychosis. On top of this, food is necessary for energy. If individuals don't eat enough, they'll be tired and unproductive. Hunger has been well documented as a factor in an individual's stress levels.

To read the full article visit: [What Causes A Mental Disorder To Develop? - HealthPrep.com](https://www.healthprep.com/what-causes-a-mental-disorder-to-develop/)

## True or False Questions about Mental Health

1. Everyone has mental health. **True**
2. Everyone has a mental illness. **False**
3. If someone in your family has a mental illness, you will also be diagnosed with a mental illness. **False**
4. You can catch a mental illness from someone who has it, it is contagious. **False**
5. If you're feeling sad one day, you are depressed. **False**
6. If you have a mental illness, you have it for life. **False**
7. Having a mental illness means you are weak. **False**
8. You should not talk about your mental illness. **False**
9. Exercise can boost your mental health. **True**
10. Video games cause mental illness. **False**
11. If you see someone having a hard day, you should leave them alone and give them space. **False**

To read the full article visit: [Microsoft Word - True or False Questions about Mental Health.docx \(stigmatafreesociety.com\)](https://www.stigmatafreesociety.com/microsoft-word-true-or-false-questions-about-mental-health.docx)

# Thank You

Dear Valued Referral Sources,

We appreciate your referrals. Thank you for your trust and confidence.

Sincerely,

***Jennifer Campbell, MSW, LSW***

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Washington Health System & Washington Physicians Group

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# WHS Center for Mental Health & Wellbeing



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## **Behavioral Health Management:**

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Greene County Crisis Line: 1-800-417-9460

Washington County 24-Hour Crisis Hotline: 1-877-225-3567

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 988 **or** 1-800-273-8255

Greenbriar Treatment Facility: 1-800-637-4673

STTARS Sexual Assault Hotline (Greene & Washington): 1-888-480-7283