

GET IT PROMOTION



Pharmacist Verity Izeboud of Mopani answers a few of our readers' questions.

ASK YOUR PHARMACIST

Q WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH?

It is defined by the World Health Organisation as "a state of well-being in which every individual realises his/her potential, copes with the life stress, works productively and contributes to his/her community".

Q HOW COMMON IS MENTAL ILLNESS?

As we focus on raising awareness on mental health, one in five South Africans either will or does suffer from a mental illness, and two out of every 100 children suffer from depression. Family, friends or colleagues are often the first to notice the symptoms and play an integral role in the treatment of the patient. Shame, fear and denial are all obstacles that often stop the patient or the family from seeking help. We need to work at getting rid of the stigma that is attached to having a mental illness and focus on early recognition and prevention.

Q WHAT ARE THE EARLY WARNING SIGNS OF POSSIBLE MENTAL ILLNESS?

This is by no means a comprehensive list, but here are a couple of signs that could indicate the need for intervention:

- Social withdrawal
- Showing a distinct loss of interest in others
- Battling to concentrate and showing illogical thought patterns
- Not being able to function normally at home, school or work
- Apathy
- Loss of initiative
- Having feelings of being discontent
- Being either fearful or suspicious of others
- Having dramatic sleep and/or appetite changes
- Mood swings that are out of the ordinary
- Substance abuse.

If several symptoms are experienced simultaneously and if daily life is negatively affected, we encourage you to see a mental-health professional.

Q WHAT KINDS OF MENTAL ILLNESS DO YOU GET?

Anxiety and depression are the most common mental-health problems worldwide and in SA and they very often go hand-in-hand. There is, however, a long list of illnesses which include anxiety disorder, anorexia nervosa, attention deficient disorder, bipolar, bulimia nervosa, obsessive compulsive disorder, pain disorder, panic disorder, post-traumatic stress, substance abuse, and schizophrenia. Many of these are debilitating and

incapacitating, but are treatable.

Treatment most commonly consists of therapy, counseling and/or medication. In severe cases, hospitalisation may be required.

SA Depression and Anxiety Group Helpline:
011-262 6396 / 0800-567 567
LifeLine: 0861-322 322

REMEMBER :

Mental illness is not a normal part of aging, but is a reality to many people due to biological, psychological and social factors. It can be treated! To be mentally healthy is to have the ability to enjoy life and use initiative, to be able to cope with normal day-to-day stress and challenges and to be flexible enough to cope with these factors.

For sound health advice contact Mopani on 013-755-5500. Please feel free to let us answer any questions that you have for our pharmacists. It would be great to hear from you. Please email your questions to www.mopani.co.za

