

What is mental health?

In the same way that physical health is about the body, mental health is about the mind.

Someone's mental health is the measure of how they think and feel. Good mental health suggests that people can think clearly and cope well with their emotional states. It also suggests that they are aware of the way they behave and can usually control it. Many people believe that mental health is also a measure of happiness.

The 21st century has seen a significant rise in mental health problems being reported, especially by young people.

What are mental health problems?

Mental health problems can affect anyone, at any stage of their life – and, more often than not, they creep up on people. They can significantly affect people's moods and actions before people realise it.

Mental health problems can be inherited and they can be the result of a physical health problem. Many arise as a result of stress or emotional trauma such as a death, repeated abuse or an experience of violence. In 2018, one survey found that 74 per cent of people went through periods when they felt stressed they were overwhelmed or unable to cope.

It is also believed that lifestyle factors such as diet, levels of exercise and social encounters can affect a person's mental health.

What defines a mental health disorder?

Many of the feelings associated with mental health disorders also occur commonly and naturally. For example, you may feel nervous before a test – but tests are logical causes for worry. When thoughts or feelings become a persistent problem they may be related to a mental health disorder.

The following are just a few of the many mental health problems that affect people.

Anxiety is a feeling of intense or prolonged fear or panic. In 2013, there were 8.2 million reported cases of anxiety in the UK. One in six young people reported experiencing it.

Anorexia and bulimia are eating disorders. Sufferers tend to worry about their weight to an unhealthy extent and persist in trying to lose weight. Girls are ten times more likely than boys to develop eating disorders.

Depression is a condition defined by extremely low mood and can also cause people to avoid activity. Depression is one of the most common mental health disorders reported.

Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) can trigger relentlessly repeating thoughts, images or feelings. Sufferers may repeat actions over and over, for example washing their hands.

Who can help with mental health problems?

Treatment is available for the mind, just like for the body. If you have questions or concerns about your mental health, some advice is available online from charities such as Mind. However, the first and most important step to take is to speak to someone you trust. You should then contact your regular or local doctor. Doctors have access to specialist mental health services and can refer patients so they receive the most suitable help.

How can we improve our mental health?

We should take care of our mental health as much as our physical health. There are many simple things that can be done to boost mental wellbeing.

- Make time for friendships. Shared experiences stop people feeling isolated and alone.
- Exercising your body will help your mind. Exercising releases natural 'happy' chemicals called endorphins. Endorphins fight stress and can relieve depression.
- Get out into nature. Fresh air, vitamin D from the sun and gentle exercise are all proven to lift moods. Even plants and animals in people's homes can help.
- Talk about your mental health. Many people, especially boys and men, are taught that discussing feelings is a sign of weakness. The opposite is true.



Read the text and make sure you understand the language within it.

You are using this text for 2 days!

Label the description with the correct condition(s).

a feeling of fear or panic	
repeating thoughts, images or feelings	
feeling extremely low	
an eating disorder	
one in six young people experience it	
worry about weight	

Label the description with the correct information.

percentage of people who felt stressed in 2018	
'happy' chemicals	
mental health charity	
activity that releases 'happy' chemicals	
vitamin that the sun can provide	
having these in your home can improve wellbeing	

Label the description with the correct condition(s).

8.2 million cases across the UK	
result of emotional trauma	
relentlessly repeating thoughts	
girls ten times more likely to have this than boys	
one of the most common types of mental illness	
sufferers repeat actions over and over	

Task 1: Label

Read the description and identify the condition.

Image is poor quality –
Section 1:

A feeling of fear or panic

Repeating thoughts, images or feelings

Feeling extremely low

An eating disorder

One in six young people experience it

Worry about weight

123 SEQUENCING

Look at *Mental health*. Number the statements from 1 to 5 to show the order they occur in the text. Look at the first line of each paragraph to help you.

Mental health problems can affect anyone, at any stage of their life – and, more often than not, they creep up on people.

Many of the feelings associated with mental health disorders also occur commonly and naturally.

Someone's mental health is the measure of how they think and feel.

Treatment is available for the mind, just like for the body.

We should take care of our mental health as much as our physical health.

Look at the 'What defines a mental health disorder?' section in *Mental health*. Number the statements from 1 to 5 to show the order they occur in the text.

Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) can trigger relentlessly repeating thoughts, images or feelings.

When thoughts or feelings become a persistent problem they may be related to a mental health disorder.

Anxiety is a feeling of intense or prolonged fear or panic.

Anorexia and bulimia are eating disorders.

Depression is a condition defined by extremely low mood and can also cause people to avoid activity.

Look at *Mental health*. Number the statements from 1 to 5 to show the order they occur in the text.

Someone's mental health is the measure of how they think and feel.

Many people believe that mental health is also a measure of happiness.

When thoughts or feelings become a persistent problem, they may be related to a mental health disorder.

Endorphins fight stress and can relieve depression.

Many people, especially boys and men, are taught that discussing feelings is a sign of weakness.

Task 2 – sequencing

Number the statements from 1 to 5.



Answers on next slide

Please do not use answers unless you are finished!

4. MENTAL HEALTH LABEL

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. anxiety | 12. plants and animals |
| 2. OCD / Obsessive-compulsive disorder | 13. anxiety |
| 3. depression | 14. mental health problems |
| 4. anorexia / bulimia | 15. OCD / Obsessive-compulsive disorder |
| 5. anxiety | 16. eating disorders |
| 6. eating disorders | 17. depression |
| 7. 74 (per cent) | 18. OCD / Obsessive-compulsive disorder |
| 8. endorphins | |
| 9. Mind | |
| 10. exercising | |
| 11. (vitamin) D | |

SEQUENCING

- 2, 3, 1, 4, 5
5, 1, 2, 3, 4
1, 2, 3, 4, 5

