



## Your Health

### Mental Health: Alzheimer's, Schizophrenia, and Depression©

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Words are explained alongside the text

Stressed syllables are underlined and in bold\*

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**Mental disorders** are often a taboo **discussion topic** as many people **shy away from** either the **admission** of having one or **having to support** someone with a mental **condition**. Unfortunately, mental disorders **are on the rise**, especially as we develop more and more **medication** that extends the human **lifespan**. We may be able to fix our bodies to enable us to live longer – but **preventing** the **degradation** of our mental state as we **age is proving to be** a much greater challenge.

The first mental disorder we'll talk about is one of the most common. As mentioned earlier, the risk of mental disorders increases as we age, with the most prominent **elderly** disorder being Dementia.

Dementia is not a specific disease but **a broad range** of symptoms that are associated with memory loss and the inability to effectively communicate anymore. The **definition** of Dementia is a relatively broad one – the Alzheimer's **association** defines it as 'a general term for a decline in mental ability severe enough to interfere with daily life'. 60 to 80 percent of Dementia is caused by Alzheimer's disease. **It's worth noting** that Alzheimer's is not a normal part of aging despite the risk going up as we get older. Unfortunately, Alzheimer's is a progressive disease which means that it **steadily gets worse** over time. During the end stages

**mental disorder** (adj.n.)  
disturbance in the normal functioning of the mind

**discussion topic** (exp.) subject of conversation

**to shy away from** (phrasal vb.) to avoid

**having to** (exp.) being obliged to

**to support** (vb.) to take care of financially

**to be on the rise** (exp.) to increase

**lifespan** (n.) length of life

**to prevent** (vb.) to stop

**to age** (vb.) to get older

**to prove to be** (vb.) to become over a period of time

**elderly** (adj.) relating to older people

**a broad range** (exp.) a wide variety

**to be worth doing sth** (vb.) sth which is considered good, useful or important to do

**steadily** (adv.) progressively

**to get worse** (exp.) to deteriorate

of the disease, the person can die due to pneumonia, **dehydration**, **malnutrition** or accidents as the disease eventually causes diminished motor **function**. **Although** there isn't a **cure** yet, many pharmaceutical companies are investing in Alzheimer's Research & Development **to** potentially **come up with** an effective drug. A recent article was published describing the effect of Ultrasound on the brain. Apparently the ultrasound waves can **break up** brain plaques. (These are abnormal protein clusters that can cause your brain to malfunction).

Our second mental disorder is Schizophrenia. It is characterized by abnormalities in at least 1 of these categories: **Delusions**, **Hallucinations**, Disorganized thinking or speech and grossly disorganized or abnormal **behavior**. About 20% of Schizophrenics attempt suicide on 1 or more **occasions**. It is a chronic and severe mental disorder that affects how a person thinks, feels and behaves. People with Schizophrenia may seem like they've **lost touch with** reality. It's known that Schizophrenia **runs in families** as it has a genetic link. We have also discovered that Schizophrenics have a different brain chemistry and structure which can **trigger** psychotic symptoms. Nowadays Schizophrenia is often successfully **managed** when patients take anti-psychotics although this can pose a problem as very often the individual won't stay on the drug regimen. As Schizophrenics are often paranoid, many people suffering from this **condition** think that the drugs are part of a governmental scheme or part of another **threatening backstory**. This isn't surprising as anti-psychotics can **dull** the senses and make you sleepy, which makes the patient feel as if they are being controlled. **Having said that**, many people have found success in the current treatments for Schizophrenia and drug companies are working on fixing the **unwanted** side effects.

Our last mental disorder is unfortunately very common and afflicts around 350 million people around the world according to the World Health **Organization**. More women **are affected by** depression than men and at

**although** (conj.) despite the fact that

**cure** (n.) successful treatment after which the patient recovers completely

**to come up with** (phrasal vb.) to invent, to develop

**to break up** (phrasal vb.) to cause to disintegrate

**behavior** (n.) the way a person acts in daily life

**to lose touch with** (exp.) to lose contact with

**to run in families** (exp.) to be genetically inherited

**to trigger** (vb.) to cause sth. to happen

**to manage** (vb.) to keep under control

**threatening backstory** (adj.n.) plot to harm them

**to dull** (vb.) to calm, to diminish sensitivity

**having said that** (exp.) despite that

current (adj.) used at the present moment

**unwanted** (adj.) undesired, negative

**to be affected by** (exp.) to be concerned by

worst, depression can lead to suicide. However, **fear not!** There are many treatments **available** for **depression**, both in terms of medication and in terms of life style changes. Clinical depression is a type of depression caused by an imbalance of serotonin in your brain. Serotonin is a neurotransmitter that causes the feelings of happiness and **wellness**, so a **lack** of this can make you feel depressed. **Luckily** antidepressants work on increasing the **levels** of Serotonin in the brain to make you feel less depressed. A non-medicated and **highly** successful treatment for depression is a type of psychotherapy called CBT or Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. This can also be used in **combination** with antidepressants. CBT works on **getting in touch with** your feelings, thoughts and behaviors **to figure out** why you might feel or act a certain way and how **to deal with** it effectively.

This week's advice: **Just because** someone may show symptoms of memory loss issues – **it doesn't mean** that they have Alzheimer's or Dementia. There are many different causes of memory problems – it could even be something as benign as a vitamin B12 **deficiency** which is very easily treated. Finally, if you or someone you know is suffering from depression - take comfort in that you are not alone and that **admitting** you need help is the first step to recovery.

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**fear not** (exp.) don't be afraid, don't worry

**available** (adj.) able to be found or obtained

**wellness** (n.) state of being or feeling well

**lack** (n.) insufficient quantity

**luckily** (adv.) fortunately

**level** (n.) amount, quantity

**highly** (adv.) very

**to get in touch with** (exp.) to understand

**to figure out** (phrasal vb.) to work out, to understand

**to deal with** (vb.) to manage

**just because...it doesn't mean** (exp.) if... it isn't always the case

**deficiency** (n.) lack

**to admit** (vb.) to recognize

### Tip:

Words ending in "sion" or "tion" all have their main stress on the penultimate syllable, egs. "**condition**" "**occasion**", "**combination**"