Physical Health and Mental Health

In America our Urgent Care Centers are FULL of adults and children waiting to be seen for acute illnesses or problems with our physical health, for example; minor cuts, burns, or rashes. When something happens to our PHYSICAL HEALTH, we promptly seek medical treatment. As for our MENTAL HEALTH, we often neglect the signs and symptoms of a problem. A vast majority of people are keeping this part of their health private and never seek the proper treatment.

According to The National Alliance on Mental Illness, nearly 60% of adults with a mental illness and roughly 50% of children aged 8-15 with a mental illness, did not receive mental health services in the previous year.

It’s important to understand that caring for your mental and emotional health are just as important to your overall wellbeing as caring for your physical health. In fact, untreated mental health issues can have negative effects on your physical health.

Factors Influencing Mental Health

There are many factors that contribute to mental health issues, including biological factors (such as genes or brain chemistry), life experiences (such as trauma or abuse), or a family history of mental health problems.

People can experience different types of mental health issues affecting mood, thinking, and behavior. Here are some of the more common ones.

- Anxiety Disorders
- Behavioral Disorders
- Eating Disorders
- Mental Healthy Disorders
- Substance Use Disorders
- Mood Disorders
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorders
- Personality Disorders
- Psychotic Disorders
- Suicidal Behavior
- Trauma Related Disorders
- Stress Related Disorders

Ways to Support Your Mental Health

- Get professional help if you need it
- Talk with your clinic provider or your family physician
- Reach out to your Employee Assistance Program
- Contact one of the many free Crisis Help Lines
- Connect with others
- Find ways to help or serve others
- Be physically active
- Eat a healthy diet
- Get an adequate amount of sleep
- Develop appropriate coping skills
- Stay positive

Change Direction is a collaboration of concerned citizens, non-profit leaders, and leaders from the private sector whose goal is to change the culture about mental illness. At the center of the campaign are the Five Signs, which may indicate an individual is experiencing emotional suffering. Learning the signs can help you recognize when someone might be struggling so you can reach out and help guide them to the appropriate care and resources. Here is a review of the five signs, as described by the campaign.
1. **Personality Change:** sudden or gradual changes in the way the person typically behaves. The changes don’t seem to fit the person’s values, or the individual may just seem different than usual.

2. **Agitation:** the person is uncharacteristically moody, angry, anxious, or agitated. They may have a hard time controlling their temper, seem irritable, can’t calm down, have trouble sleeping, or may explode over minor issues.

3. **Withdrawal:** a change in someone’s typical sociability, such as pulling away from their usual social supports. They isolate or withdraw from family and friends, they stop doing activities they used to enjoy, and they may fail to make it to work or school.

4. **Poor Self-care:** the person stops taking care of themselves and many even engage in risky behavior or display acts of poor judgement. This may include neglecting personal hygiene, abusing alcohol or other substances, or engaging in other self-destructive behaviors that may alienate loved ones.

5. **Hopelessness:** The person used to be optimistic but now can’t find anything to be hopeful about. They may be over-whelmed, suffer from extreme or prolonged grief, or have feeling of worthlessness or guilt. They may say the world would be better off without them, suggesting suicidal thinking.

If you recognize any of the five signs in yourself, or someone you know: free, confidential help is available!

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### HEALTHY RECIPE

#### Cowboy Caviar

- 2 (14-ounce) cans black-eyed peas, rinsed, drained, or 3 cups cooked black-eyed peas
- 1 (14-ounce) can black beans, rinsed and drained, or 1 ½ cups cooked black beans
- 1 ½ cups fresh corn kernels (about 2 ears of corn), or 1 (14-ounce) can corn, drained
- 1 ½ cups chopped tomatoes (I used about 4 Roma tomatoes, about ¾ pound)
- 1 medium red, orange or yellow bell pepper
- ¾ cup chopped red onion (about ½ small red onion)
- ½ cup chopped cilantro, leaves and stems
- 1 to 2 jalapeños, ribs removed, seeded and finely chopped
- 1 avocado (optional)

#### Italian dressing

- 1/3 cup olive oil
- 3 tablespoons red wine vinegar or lime juice
- 2 medium cloves garlic, pressed or minced
- 1 to 1 ½ teaspoons salt, to taste
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- ½ teaspoon dried basil
- 1 teaspoon maple syrup or honey
- 1/8 teaspoon red pepper flakes
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

#### Instructions

1. In a large serving bowl, combine the drained black-eyed peas, black beans, corn, chopped tomatoes, bell pepper, onion, cilantro and jalapeño. If you’ll be including avocado, wait to dice it until you’re ready to serve the dip, so it doesn’t turn brown in the meantime.

2. In a cup, whisk together the dressing ingredients until emulsified. Drizzle the dressing over the serving bowl, toss until well mixed. Season to taste with additional salt & pepper. For best flavor, let the mixture marinate for at least 20 minutes before serving. If you’re adding avocado, mix it in just before serving.