

Mind Your Mental Health - April is Stress Awareness Month

If you or someone you know needs help, please call [1-800-273-8255](tel:1-800-273-8255) for the [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#).

In April, healthcare professionals unite to raise awareness of the impact of stress. When stress triggers your body's "fight-or-flight" response, it strains your emotional and physical health. Over time you may lose the ability to recognize the harmful effects of stress.

- 1. Spot the signs.** Excessive stress often shows as muscle tightness, headaches, fatigue, sleep problems, high blood pressure and digestive problems. It also often causes restlessness, anxiety, irritability and depression.
- 2. Track and manage stressors.** Keep a journal and document the recurring situations that create your stress, and how you typically respond. While you may not be able to avoid stressful circumstances, you can learn to group them or plan more positive ways to view them.
- 3. Care for you!** Adopt a relaxation technique, get enough sleep and exercise, eat a balanced diet and schedule time for activities where you can explore your interests, relax and recharge.

Help is available! [Visit the Mind Your Mental Health website](#) or contact your program to learn more about how to help yourself or someone you care about.

This month, Stamp Out Stigma recognizes alcohol awareness. Alcohol is the most commonly used addictive substance in the United States: 17.6 million people, or one in every 12 adults, suffer from alcohol use disorder or dependence along with several million more who engage in risky, binge drinking patterns that could lead to alcohol problems. It's our job to help end the stigma surrounding addictions and mental health by sharing resources and starting conversations. **Remember, mental illness does not discriminate.**

Here are some important facts you should know:

- An estimated 88,000 people die from alcohol-related causes annually, making alcohol the [third leading preventable cause of death](#) in the United States.
- [Long-term health risks](#) of alcohol use include high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, liver disease, and digestive problems.
- Approximately 14.8 million people aged 12 or older had an [alcohol use disorder](#).
- In 2018, 26.45% of people ages 18 or older reported that they [engaged in binge drinking](#) in the past month.