Common WARNING SIGNS of Mental Illness

Diagnosing mental illness isn't a straightforward science. We can't test for it the same way we can test blood sugar levels for diabetes. Each condition has its own set of unique symptoms, though symptoms often overlap. Common signs and/or symptoms can include:

- Feeling very sad or withdrawn for more than two weeks
- Trying to harm or end one's life or making plans to do so
- Severe, out-of-control, risk-taking behavior that causes harm to self or others
- Sudden overwhelming fear for no reason, sometimes with a racing heart, physical discomfort or difficulty breathing
- Significant weight loss or gain



- Seeing, hearing or believing things that aren't real*
- Excessive use of alcohol or drugs
- Drastic changes in mood, behavior, personality or sleeping habits
- Extreme difficulty concentrating or staying still
- Intense worries or fears that get in the way of daily activities

*Various communities and backgrounds might view this sign differently based on their beliefs and experiences. Some people within these communities and cultures may not interpret hearing voices as unusual.

WORRIED ABOUT YOURSELF OR SOMEONE YOU CARE ABOUT?

If you notice any of these symptoms, it's important to ask questions

Try to understand what they're experiencing and how their daily life is impacted

Making this connection is often the first step to getting treatment

50% of all lifetime mental illness begins by age **14**

75% by age **24**

KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

Talk with a health care professional

Learn more about mental illness

Take a mental health education class

Call the NAMI HelpLine at 800-950-NAMI (6264)

Data from CDC, NIMH and other select sources. Find citations for this resource at nami.org/mhstats

NAMI HelpLine 800-950-NAMI (6264) | NAMI | NAMICommunicate | NAMICommunicate | www.nami.org

NAMI National Alliance on Mental Illness