



## Quiz: Would you recognize mental illness?

Although mental health and mental awareness may be increasing, it still is not always easy to perceive when someone close to you is experiencing symptoms of mental illness. Mental illness can be difficult to spot as it does not always look the way we think it will, and it isn't as obvious in real life as it is in representations in television and film. Test your ability to recognize mental illness warning signs and check how prepared you are to take action with this quiz.

1. True or false: a change in appetite could be a sign of depression

**Answer:** True, an increased or decreased appetite is often a sign of depression

2. Which of the following is not a sign of mental illness

- a) Problems with concentration, memory or cognitive function
- b) Insomnia or other sleep disturbances
- c) A desire for a big life change such as a new choice of career or the wish to end a relationship
- d) Withdrawal from social activities or family life

**Answer:** c). An interest in making a big change in lifestyle or goals in the absence of other symptoms is not a sign of mental illness

3. Which of the following are signs of an anxiety disorder:

- a) Excessive fears, worries and irrational phobias
- b) Intense discomfort in social situations
- c) Sudden overwhelming feelings of doom combined with a racing heart, shortness of breath or other physical symptoms

Let us help. Access your Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) 24/7 by phone, web or mobile app.  
1.800.387.4765 or [workhealthlife.com](http://workhealthlife.com)



- d) Repetitive disturbing thoughts and/or a need to perform certain actions to feel “okay”
- e) All of the above

**Answer:** e). Each of the above is a symptom of a different anxiety disorder in the following order:

a) Generalized Anxiety Disorder ; b) Social Anxiety Disorder or social phobia; c) Panic Disorder; d) Obsessive Compulsive Disorder

4. What should you do if you suspect someone close to you is suffering from a mental illness?

- a) Call a medical professional immediately
- b) Take them for a night on the town or for a much needed vacation
- c) Talk to them about your concerns and encourage them to seek help
- d) Lend them a book about mental health and wellness

**Answer:** c). If you think someone might be dealing with a mental illness, speak to them, and be open and receptive to hearing about their experience. Encourage them to talk to their doctor or speak to a counsellor about what they are going through.

5. Depression and bipolar disorder are both examples of:

- a) Mood disorders
- b) Personality disorders
- c) Anxiety disorders

**Answer:** a) Mood disorders: these disorders affect approximately 10% of the population, with depression being the most common.

6. True or False: Asking someone directly if they are having suicidal thoughts increases their risk of suicide

**Answer:** False. Talking to someone about suicidal intent can actually lower their risk of attempting suicide by decreasing anxiety and opening lines of communication

7. True or false: If someone is having a panic attack, the best way to help them is to tell them to calm down and tell them to go for a run

**Answer:** False. If someone is having a panic attack, the best way to help them is to speak slowly, assure them that this is temporary and they are safe, and encourage them to take long deep breaths until the panic attack passes

8. What is the best way to prevent mental illness?

- a) Eat a healthy diet, get enough sleep, and exercise regularly
- b) Don't drink alcohol or do drugs
- c) Avoid overly stressful activities and over stimulating environments

Let us help. Access your Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) 24/7 by phone, web or mobile app. 1.800.387.4765 or [workhealthlife.com](http://workhealthlife.com)



- d) Spend more time with mentally healthy, high functioning people
- e) There is no one sure way to prevent mental illness

**Answer:** e). Mental illness is usually caused by a combination of biological and environmental factors and cannot be prevented. However, eating a balanced diet, getting enough sleep, exercising regularly and reducing your intake of alcohol and drugs can lessen the symptoms of mental illness and its likelihood to interfere with your life

9. True or false: These days, there is no longer any stigma associated with mental illness

**Answer:** False. Although stigma around mental illness may be decreasing, there is still a lot of fear, shame, and ignorance around it. Stigma is one of the biggest obstacles to seeking help and treatment for mental illnesses

### **How did you do?**

No matter what your level of mental illness awareness is, it is always a good idea to learn more and increase your understanding. If you suspect that you or someone you love is experiencing signs mental illness, the best thing to do is to talk about it: talk to your family and friends, talk to your loved one, and talk to a professional about your worries so that you or they can get the help you need.

Your Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) provides you with an immediate and confidential help for any work, health or life concern. We're available anytime and anywhere. Let us help.

Let us help. Access your Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) 24/7 by phone, web or mobile app.  
1.800.387.4765 or [workhealthlife.com](http://workhealthlife.com)



## Counselling in a digital world

Along with almost every other aspect of day to day life, counselling is also a digital option now. Clients can now access mental health services such as psychotherapy, couples' therapy and coaching from the comfort of their living rooms or a hotel room far from where their counsellor lives. From what used to be exclusively face-to-face services, counsellors now offer sessions online via email, video-chat, instant-messaging, group forums, and more.

For clients, this means more choice and flexibility: they can have ongoing therapy when away on business or vacation, or choose to receive support in a way that best fits their learning style and comfort level. What does all this mean for counsellors and for the clients engaging in counselling? Let's take a look at some of the intricacies and specificities of what makes online counselling unique.

### Addressing fears and misconceptions about digital counselling

Often people are tentative, unsure or reluctant when they hear about online counselling. After all, the face-to-face aspect of traditional therapy seems critical to its success and inseparable from how the therapeutic process functions. Reservations about trying online counselling might include the misunderstanding that it isn't "real" counselling, but this is far from the case. Digital counselling is an effective method of support.

People also sometimes fear that if it's online, it isn't private and confidential. This is a valid concern but reputable practitioners should be utilizing the latest advances in security software. It is worth noting here that counsellors online are bound by the same ethical standards as their face-to-face counterparts and cannot in any way share the information you tell them without your consent.

Counsellors may need to update and refine their skill sets for online counselling environments. They will need to find ways to keep their clients "in the room" - that is keeping them focused and engaged in the face of multiple distractions. In crisis counselling, they will need to adjust their risk assessment skills and know when to direct clients to an in-person form of counselling is needed to ensure safety.

### Benefits of online counselling

Let's take a look at some of the reasons online counselling is on the rise and why you might choose to take advantage of it:

#### Mobility and accessibility

Online counselling goes where you go! This flexibility can be a great feature for people who travel a lot or are just on-the-go in their own community. Likewise, it is accessible for people who have mobility restrictions, as they can access these services from home. All in all, online counselling is going to fit that much easier into your daily schedule as it skips any commuting to see your counsellor.

Let us help. Access your Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) 24/7 by phone, web or mobile app.  
1.800.387.4765 or [workhealthlife.com](http://workhealthlife.com)



### **Feeling of safety**

Going to see a counsellor face-to-face for the very first time can be daunting. People worry about feeling awkward, nervous, wanting to leave, and not knowing what to say. What if you could just type in some of what you are feeling and have a compassionate and skilled professional on the other end to offer feedback and help. Online counselling can often be an accessible first step for people who would otherwise never consider seeing a counsellor. Communicating online can provide a feeling of security and anonymity, which can encourage more open and honest sharing.

### **Lessened social stigma**

Although there is absolutely nothing wrong with seeing a therapist and therapy is sought by healthy individuals, some people still do not feel comfortable with it. Speaking to someone online may feel more casual and because it is so new, it does not have the historical associations seeing a therapist may have.

### **Cost effectiveness**

Online counselling is very cost effective from both sides of the screen. For counsellors, it can save on the overhead of renting an office. For clients, travel time, transportation and parking costs are eliminated, as is time away from work.

### **Who is best suited for online counselling**

There are no hard and fast rules about who is the ideal client for online counselling - indeed there is no "ideal", and this type of delivery can suit a diverse range of people. But there are some guidelines for who might be best suited for this type of counselling:

- People 18 years or older
- Individuals who have an easier time expressing themselves in writing than through speaking
- Are comfortable using technology and already have communication technology as part of their everyday lives
- Are dealing with issues that are not of a high risk or crisis nature

Online counselling is on the rise and we will likely see it become more and more prevalent as technological developments make it more accessible and more secure. However, this doesn't mean it's for everybody. Go with your gut: if you're more comfortable seeing someone in person, then that is going to be what works best for you. Everyone is different and what you need today may differ from what you need tomorrow. What's most important is that you get the help you need in the environment in which you feel safe.

Your Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) provides you with an immediate and confidential help for any work, health or life concern. We're available anytime and anywhere. Let us help.

**Let us help. Access your Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) 24/7 by phone, web or mobile app.**  
**1.800.387.4765 or [workhealthlife.com](http://workhealthlife.com)**

