

June is MEN'S HEALTH Month!

Every June, Men's Health Month shines a spotlight on the unique health challenges men face and encourages early detection, healthy habits, and regular checkups.

It's a time to support the men in our lives — fathers, brothers, sons, partners, and friends — in taking charge of their physical and mental well-being.

This Week's Focus: Mental Health

According to the *National Alliance on Mental Illness*:

On average, men die by suicide nearly **4x more often** than women, yet they are significantly less likely to seek treatment.

Signs of Depression to Watch For:

- Irritability or Anger
(**more common than sadness**)
- Feeling numb, hopeless, or empty
- Low motivation or trouble making decisions
- Loss of interest in hobbies, work, sex, or relationships
- Fatigue or low energy, even after rest
- Sleep issues (insomnia, restless sleep, or oversleeping)
- Changes in appetite (eating more or less)
- Withdrawing from family and friends
- Avoiding responsibilities at home or work
- Neglecting appearance or hygiene
- Sexual dysfunction (low libido or performance issues)
- Unexplained aches and pains (**back pain**, headaches, stomach issues)
- Using alcohol, drugs, or risky behaviors to cope

! Serious Red Flags !

- Talking about death or suicide — even vaguely
- Giving away possessions, or writing a will unexpectedly
- Sudden calmness after prolonged distress



LET'S TURN THE TIDE

Here's What You Can Do Right Now:

- **Call 988** — Mental health crisis line is free, confidential, and open 24/7.
- **Eat Mood-Supporting Foods** — Salmon, Sardines, Nuts, Seeds (***Omega-3 food/supplements have been consistently linked to lower depression rates***), Leafy greens, Berries, Legumes, and Fermented Foods.
- **Move your body** — **EXERCISE IS POWERFUL** for stress relief and mood.
- **Join a support group** — virtual or in-person, there are men-only spaces built for you.

HOW MOVEMENT LIFTS YOUR MOOD

Physical activity increases levels of endorphins, serotonin, and norepinephrine—all of which help elevate mood and reduce stress. It also promotes BDNF (brain-derived neurotrophic factor), **supporting the growth and health of brain cells.**

Clinical Evidence – Exercise & Mental Health

- A meta-analysis of 23 Randomized Controlled Trials (977 participants) **found exercise significantly reduced depressive symptoms—almost on par with antidepressants versus control conditions.**
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/27253219/>
- A 2023 meta-review of 41 trials (2,264 individuals) **showed large improvements in depression, particularly with supervised, moderate-to-vigorous aerobic or resistance training.**
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/36731907/>

Any Movement Helps

- Even **5 minutes of activity** or a **10-minute walk** can reduce stress—giving your brain a reset without intense effort.
- **5,000 daily steps** were linked to reduced depressive symptoms in a review of 96,000 adults—**walking 7,000–10,000 steps lowered depression risk by 31%.**
- **Consistency beats Intensity.** - Short bursts often work better than sporadic intense efforts.

“You can't pour from an empty cup.” - Taking care of yourself helps you show up better for everyone else.

Resources

- **Suicide & Crisis Lifeline:** Call/Text **988** or chat at 988lifeline.org
- **Mental Health America:** mhanational.org
- **National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI):** nami.org/MHM for community programs and support
- **Man Therapy** – mantherapy.org

Healing is possible and you're not alone in this journey.