

# World Mental Health Day

It's estimated that [23% of Missouri](#) adult residents experienced a mental illness in 2020. That makes the likelihood of someone you know silently suffering pretty high!

Mental health needs to become a bigger priority for us all in 2023. Thankfully, October 10th is the perfect day to start to change our mindset.

October 10 is World Mental Health Day!

We hope you will take the time to celebrate this important day by learning more about mental health and mental wellness. If you can identify the signs and symptoms of mental health issues, you will be better positioned to act.

From there, you can help spread awareness about the importance of mental health.

Read on to learn more and empower yourself to make a difference.

## World Mental Health Day: Spreading Awareness

We cannot properly celebrate World Mental Health Day until we know more about what mental health means. Mental health is described as our overall mental state. It [includes our psychological](#), emotional, and social well-being.

Our mental health can determine how we handle stress. It can change how we act, think, and feel. It can also determine our emotional limits and boundaries.

There are many conditions, disorders, and diseases that can alter mental health. Take Covid-19, for instance. This virus can alter someone's mental health by inducing [insomnia, anxiety, and even depression](#) into their life. (In many cases, it has affected them significantly.)

Here are a few common mental health problems:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
- Panic disorder
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
- Social anxiety disorder
- Bipolar affective disorder
- Schizophrenia

The more you know about these conditions, the better equipped you will be to spot them.

## **How to Spot Signs of Mental Health Problems**

Since mental health takes into account many factors and the symptoms present in different ways, we can define it as a “spectrum.” That is why it is paramount to identify the symptoms of worsening mental health. Here are some things to watch for:

- Experiencing physical symptoms of anxiety (stomach issues, chest tightness, headaches)
- Feeling overly stressed and anxious to the point it prevents you from daily activities.
- Emotional outbursts
- Weight or appetite problems
- Withdrawing from family, friends, and favorite activities
- Abusing substances
- Experiencing suicidal thoughts
- Engaging in high-risk behavior
- Performing worse at work or school

Finding the right treatment is the pathway forward to better health.

## How to Help Someone With Mental Health Issues

If you spot signs that their mental health is getting worse, then act on it immediately.

Encourage your loved one to open up about how they are feeling. Depending on the situation, you might also recommend professional help. A visit with a [behavioral health](#) expert could help your loved one change their life.

## Celebrate World Mental Health Day on October 10

Understanding the impacts of mental health starts with getting informed. We need to be able to identify symptoms and issues. That way, we can help everyone cope by suggesting treatments for mental health issues.

On October 10 and beyond, keep this newfound information in mind.

Now that you know more, it's time to act. If you are in Missouri or know someone in need, consider [consulting with our health network](#). We can be reached by phone 844-853-8937 or walk in to start an assessment at a Compass Health Network location near you.

If you are in crisis, then call 988 to contact the Missouri lifeline suicide and crisis hotline now.

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## The Warning Signs of Domestic Abuse That You Should Never

# Ignore

Domestic violence is far too common in Missouri. In fact, Missouri has the third-most abuse reports in the United States. In a single year, the state sees more than [45,500 reports](#) of abuse.

October is domestic abuse awareness month. Awareness month is a great opportunity to increase your knowledge of the signs of domestic abuse, so you can be an advocate for individuals who are involved with an abusive partner.

Read on to learn how to stop domestic abuse. Explore topics such as what to do if you suspect domestic abuse.

## What Are the Different Types of Abuse?

To be an advocate for others, it's important to understand the many different types of abuse. Physical abuse is the easiest type to spot.

This is because abusers often leave their mark on a victim. They may leave bruises and cuts on a victim's body. It is not uncommon to see the abused walking gingerly after abuse.

Many victims try to cover it up to protect their abusers. They may wear a long-sleeve shirt to conceal bruises or put on makeup to hide blemishes on their face.

Some abusers do not lay a hand on their victims. Instead, they use psychological or [mental abuse](#) as their weapon of choice. These types of abuse are much harder to identify. Even harder to recognize are the signs of financial, religious or sexual abuse. It is not uncommon for a victim to suffer multiple forms of abuse throughout the duration of their relationship, and even after the relationship has ended.

## What Are the Signs of Domestic Abuse?

Many people feel uneasy asking an abuse victim about their cuts and bruises. The best tactic is to casually ask your friend or loved one how they got that bruise, scratch, limp, etc. and pay close attention to their reaction.

Also, look for unexplainable clothing choices. Is the victim wearing a hooded sweatshirt on a warm summer day?

There are professional tips for identifying [mental or psychological abuse](#). For example, you may see a change in personality or behavior from your loved one. They may suddenly become reserved or introverted.

In some cases, your loved one may become distant. They may not have the desire to be social, or their abuser may disallow them to leave the home. This can lead to canceled plans. Also, they may experience feelings of depression or anxiety.

Many victims turn to drugs or alcohol in the wake of abuse or are forced to begin using a substance by their abuser. Observing a new or increased consumption of a substance may indicate that something is wrong.

## What to Do if You Suspect Abuse?

Once you have confident suspicions of abuse, it is time to help your loved one. If you see something, it is important to say something.

It's best if the victim seeks help on their own. You should encourage a loved one to seek help but understand they may not want to compromise the abuser. Leaving an abusive relationship is often the most dangerous time for a victim.

There are [abuse hotlines](#) that provide resources and guidance for victims and their families. This is the most anonymous and discrete way to handle abuse.

## **Your Guide to Spotting and Reporting Abuse**

You now have a basic understanding of spotting and reporting abuse.

To help, start off with a conversation with the victim. Without prying or pushing, try to persuade them to seek help.

If you are a victim of domestic abuse and need medical attention please call our shelter services with resources at 636-232-2301 or [contact us](#) at Compass Health Network to receive professional help.

You now have a basic understanding of spotting an abusive relationship. The most important thing you can do if you know someone is living with abuse is to offer support without pressure. Assure the victim that you are there to listen and refrain from telling them what they “should, or must” do.

Have a list of resources to provide the victim and give them a safe place to use a telephone to contact services. Advocates at A Safe Place are available 24/7 every day of the year to speak with victims. Advocates can provide connection to resources, safety planning, crisis services, emergency shelter and more. Friends and family of victims are also invited to call the shelter for resources, education and support.

You may offer to store a go bag for the victim if they flee in a hurry. You can help the victim gather important documents such as photo id's, birth certificates and social security cards and a change of clothes or some spare cash to put in the go bag.

On average a victim will attempt to leave an abuser seven times before they are successful. Through this process they often lose their support network as family and friends grow tired of seeing them return to their abuser. The best thing to do for a victim is have resources ready when they are needed and to remain a constant supportive person who will not judge

or lecture the victim's choices.

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## October is National Dental Hygiene Month

By age 8, over half of children (52%) have experienced cavities in their primary teeth, and shockingly, [1 in 4 adults](#) aged 20 to 64 currently battles with cavities.

As we welcome October, it's more than just a celebration of autumn leaves and pumpkin spice; it's a time to prioritize our oral health.

Why you ask? Because October is National Dental Hygiene Month!

Many might be aware of the dental challenges children face, but how often do we consider adult dental health? If you've ever wondered why dental hygiene is so essential for adults, this month, and especially this brief guide, holds the answers. Read on to discover the importance of a healthy smile, no matter your age.

### Why Is Dental Hygiene Important for Adults?

Many adults think that dental hygiene is only for children, but this isn't true. Adults need to take care of their teeth and gums just as much as kids do, if not more. In fact, dental hygiene can help you avoid problems such as:

## **Tooth Decay**

This occurs when plaque buildup on your teeth causes damage to the enamel. Bacteria in your mouth convert sugars and starches into acids that erode the enamel and cause cavities. Tooth decay can lead to cavities, pain, sensitivity, and even tooth loss.

## **Gum Disease**

This is the inflammation and infection of the gums caused by plaque and tartar. It can cause bleeding, swelling, redness, and bad breath. If left untreated without a [dental check-up](#), it can lead to periodontitis-a more severe form of gum disease that can damage the bone and tissue that support the teeth.

## **Oral Cancer**

This is the abnormal growth of cells in the mouth or throat. It can affect the lips, tongue, cheeks, gums, or palate. It can cause sores, lumps, pain, difficulty swallowing, or changes in your voice. It can be life-threatening if not detected early.

## **Enjoy the Benefits of Dental Hygiene Practices**

Practicing good dental hygiene can also be good for your general health. Learn more about the benefits below.

### **Reduce the Risk of Heart Disease and Stroke**

Poor dental hygiene can allow bacteria to enter your bloodstream and cause inflammation and infection in your arteries and heart valves. This can increase your chances of having a heart attack or stroke.

### **Improve Your Blood Sugar Control**

Poor dental hygiene practices can lead to infections and inflammation in your gums. This can negatively impact your body's ability to process insulin and control blood sugar levels properly. People with diabetes are more prone to gum disease, which then raises blood sugar and increases your [risk of developing diabetes](#).



## **Boost Your Self-Esteem and Confidence**

Having stained, missing, or crooked teeth can make you self-conscious and reluctant to smile fully. Conversely, a healthy, attractive smile gives you confidence in social situations and business settings. It also works wonders for your [mental health](#) and self-image.

## **Celebrate National Dental Hygiene Month With Compass Health Network**

October is National Dental Hygiene Month, and there's no better time to take care of your oral health and smile. Whether you need a routine check-up, a filling, a crown, a denture, or a root canal, Compass Health Network's Missouri dentists are ready to help you achieve your dental goals.

Reach out to [Compass Health Network](#) today for help finding a dentist in Missouri.