



Mental Health Facts:

Almost half of Americans Will Have a Mental Illness

A survey by Harvard Medical School found that in the American population lifetime prevalence estimates for any mental disorder were 46.6%, 28.8% for anxiety disorders, 20.8% for mood disorders, 24.8% for impulse control disorders, and 14.6% for substance use disorders. Half of all cases started by age 14 and three-quarters by age 24. The study found that early symptoms of mental illness, which often begin in the teenage years, are often ignored.

Mental Illnesses Rise on College Campuses

Almost 95 percent of college counseling centers report an increase in the past few years in the number of students taking psychiatric medications when they arrive at college. The college years, ages 18 to 22, are a common time for those with a mental illness to experience their first bout with depression or first schizophrenic break. Colleges are reporting an increase in the intensity of mental problems, including depression, stress and self-injury.

According to experts the reasons for the increased severity and incidence of mental illness are mounting academic and parental pressure and the rising financial burden of attending college, along with roommate and relationship problems and figuring out what to do with their lives.

Divorce Rate Drops, But Fewer Marriages

A Rutgers University report sets the divorce rate at 17.7 per 1,000 married women, down from 22.6 in 1980. The marriage rate has plunged 50% since 1970, from 76.5 per 1,000 unmarried women to 39.9 per 1,000. "Co-habitation is here to stay" according to the author of the study, David Popenoe, who sees this as a problem for children. "As society shifts from marriage to co-habitation – which is what's happening – you have an increase in family instability."

Mental Health facts:

A survey of a thousand people showed that most Americans express a preference for "non-biological", i.e., not medication, approaches to most behavioral problems. The study was released by the *American Journal of Public Health*.

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists announced that the antidepressant, paxil, poses a risk to an unborn fetus, and should not be taken by pregnant women and women planning to become pregnant.

More than 15% of Americans take prozac, zoloft, paxil, wellbutrin or other antidepressants, according to author Ronald Dworkin in his new book, *Artificial Happiness*.

Ten percent of new fathers experience post-partum depression, compared to 14% of new mothers, according to a study published in *Pediatrics*. Dartmouth Medical School found that 17% of new

mothers in three rural pediatrics practices had one depressive symptom and 6% were at risk for major depression.

A study by Boston's Brigham & Women's Hospital and Harvard Medical School found that employers would save \$2,895 per 1000 workers if all employees were screened for depression and offered counseling.

Up to a half of all Americans suffer from occasional or chronic insomnia.

A study published in the journal of the American Cancer Society, *Cancer*, reported that 12% of cancer patients had at least one psychiatric disorder, but fewer than half of them received mental health services. Yet 90% of cancer patients expressed willingness to be treated for emotional problems.

Some 16 million Americans have Intermittent Explosive Disorder, according to a study funded by the National Institute of Mental Health. The average sufferer experienced 43 explosive episodes, resulting in \$1,359 in property damage.