

Mental Illness Detection

If a family member or one of your friends starts acting strange, would you be able to tell if he/she is suffering from a mental disorder?

According to director of mental health services at the health ministry, Dr Earl Wright, the most common forms of mental illness in Jamaica are major depressive disorder, anxiety disorder and psychotic disorders such as schizophrenia. He said 18 per cent of Jamaicans suffer from depression, 10 per cent suffer from anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorders and one per cent from schizophrenia. But these illnesses can be managed and treated with medications where necessary, according to Dr Wright. "The way to manage the depression is to decrease the levels of stress and if it's moderate to severe, we have many medications that are very helpful. Around 60 to 80 per cent of people with depression are successfully treated," he explained. "In Jamaica, in most health centre, there is someone who is able to recognise and manage depression." He said the most common warning signs of mental disorders are: Depression Depression is a serious medical illness that negatively affects how a person feels, the way they think and their actions. Symptoms of depression include:. Marked personality change. They stop doing things that were once enjoyable

- . Feeling sad or fretful
- . Feelings of hopelessness and worthlessness
- . Lack of concentration
- . Difficulty making decisions or remembering things
- . Change in sleep patterns - sleeping too much or sleeping too little
- . Change of appetite - eating too much or too little
- . Loss of interest in sex
- . Suicidal thoughts
- . Feeling tired all the time

There are also physical manifestations such as backache or headache and gastric pains Anxiety disorder People suffering from an anxiety disorder are subject to intense, prolonged feelings of fright and distress for reasons that are not readily obvious. People who suffer from anxiety disorders normally complain about:. Racing heartbeats

- . Feeling tightness in the throat
- . Indigestion
- . Feeling discomfort or anxiety Schizophrenia Schizophrenia is a serious mental illness that affects how a person thinks, feels, and behaves. The person finds it difficult to tell the difference between real and imagined experiences, to think logically, to express feelings, or to behave appropriately. The symptoms include:. Hallucinations and illusions

- . Delusions
- . Disordered thinking
- . Lack of emotional expression
- . Inappropriate reactions

Paranoia If you have any questions about your mental health, please call:

- . North-east Region - 972-2272
- . Southern Region -962-3370
- . Western Region - 518-4108
- . South-east -930-1152