

YOUR CARE POLMED

September 2023



MEN'S MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

Poor mental health can affect anyone, but it's often overlooked in men.



STATISTICS SUGGEST THAT

in South Africa, men are more likely to die by suicide than women.



DEPRESSION SYMPTOMS IN MEN

Symptoms of depression present differently in men than in women.

For men, symptoms can include:

- Excessive drinking or drug abuse
- Avoiding family or social interactions
- An obsessive increase in work habits
- An increase in controlling or abusive behaviour
- Anger and frustration
- Engaging in risky behaviour, such as gambling or unsafe sex
- Suicidal ideation (suicidal thoughts or ideas)



WHY DON'T MEN TALK ABOUT THEIR FEELINGS?

"While women may be diagnosed with depression more than men, men don't speak about their feelings till it's too late," says Cassey Chambers, operations director for the South African Depression and Anxiety Group (SADAG).

The stigma of being perceived as weak is associated with depression and often prevents men from seeking help. And it's this perception that may make men shy away from talking about their mental health challenges.



BOOSTING MEN'S MENTAL HEALTH

Steps towards improved mental health involve seeking **professional help** and **treatment**.

There are also **lifestyle adjustments** that can increase coping skills:

- EXERCISE**
Regular exercise can improve your mood. Aim for 30 minutes or more, three to five days a week.
- EAT WELL**
Eat a diet rich in fruits, vegetables and whole grains but low in added sugar, and processed foods and meats.
- AVOID ALCOHOL**
Heavy drinking has been associated with an increased risk of depression.
- GET A HOBBY**
A hobby can benefit your mental health. This could include gardening, journaling, photography and cooking healthy meals.
- SPEND TIME WITH LOVED ONES**
Feeling loved may also encourage you to share your feelings.

It shows true strength to be honest about your feelings, so you can access the support you need. Don't wait until it's too late.

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Published: September 2023

