

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Understanding how HIV can affect your mental health can help you overcome this challenge if and when it occurs.

Mental health issues associated with HIV can come very early. Receiving an HIV diagnosis may be very difficult for you and your loved ones to handle. But know that there are resources in Los Angeles County to help you treat your HIV infection and find support from peers and others. Mental health issues may also present themselves later on in your experience with HIV.

HIV also affects how your brain functions, which may lead to dementia and other forms of mental illness.

It is essential you be candid with your care provider, who may be able to provide you some relief, refer you to other providers and determine if your HIV medications are affecting your mental health.

What HIV-Related Mental Health Issues May Occur?

Mental health issues that commonly occur in people with HIV include:

-Stress-related disorders

-Depression

-Anxiety

-Dementia

-Grief

-Denial

-Suicidal thoughts

These issues could lead to unhealthy behaviors if not addressed. Understanding how HIV affects your mental well-being will help you recognize these behaviors early and encourage you to seek help in treating and resolving the issue.

What Kind of Mental Health Services are Available?

-Individual Counseling: You and your counselor will meet one-on-one to talk about your mental health issues and to develop a treatment plan

-Couples Counseling: You and your partner or significant other meet jointly with a counselor to talk about your issues and develop a treatment plan. When your partner is not infected with HIV, couples counseling can promote understanding of the issues you face together. Even if you are coping well, your partner may require your support in resolving his or her own issues.

-Family counseling: You and your family may benefit from sessions with a counselor

-Group counseling: You may begin to come to terms with your situation by talking in a group setting with others in a similar situation

-Psychiatric treatment: You may benefit from short-term intervention sessions provided by a psychiatrist or under one's supervision

FOR MORE INFORMATION

-For the most up-to-date Mental Health listings visit www.hivla.org

-See the Peer Support section of this directory or visit www.hivla.org

-Contact the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health Access Center at (800) 854-7771

