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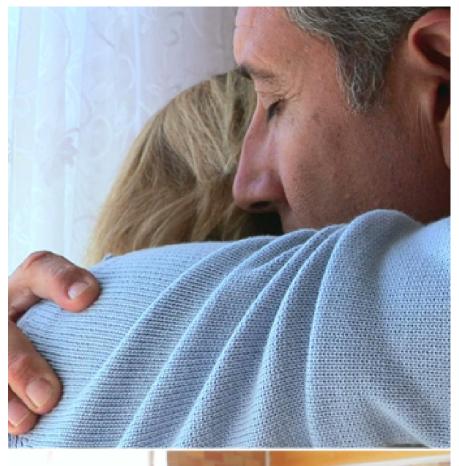**See the Video**

Overview

This is a name we give to disorders of the mind. Depression, anorexia, bipolar disorder and schizophrenia are examples of some well-known mental illnesses, but there are a wide range of others. These disorders can affect your mood, and the way you think and act. Some are very disruptive and hard to treat. But most can be managed with proper care.

Causes

We don't always understand what causes mental illness. Some disorders are genetic, and may run in families. Your illness may be linked to the way your brain is structured, or the way it works. Other factors may involve things you have experienced in your life and things in your environment.

Symptoms

Mental illness can cause a wide range of symptoms. Your illness may affect the way you view yourself, others and reality. You may have emotional problems, with extreme, unpredictable moods. You may have problems sleeping or concentrating. You may engage in risky behavior, and you may do things that are harmful. Some mental illnesses can cause dark thoughts and violent actions. If you have a mental illness, it may be difficult for you to have healthy relationships. You may struggle to make and keep friends, and you may find it hard to cope with your life.

Treatment

Treatment options for mental illness often include medications and talk therapy. There may be other options, too. You may benefit from long-term assistance. Your healthcare provider can create a plan that's right for you.

Actor portrayals in photos