



NAMI

National Alliance on Mental Illness

Stark County

Winter 2022

Is COVID affecting your Mental Health?

Fear, worry, and stress are normal responses to perceived or real threats, and at times when we are faced with uncertainty or the unknown. So it is normal and understandable that people are experiencing fear in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Added to the fear of contracting the virus in a pandemic such as COVID-19 are the significant changes to our daily lives as our movements are restricted in support of efforts to contain and slow down the spread of the virus. Faced with new realities of working from home, temporary unemployment, home-schooling of children, and lack of physical contact with other family members, friends and colleagues, it is important that we look after our mental, as well as our physical, health. Following the outbreak of COVID-19, depression and anxiety among U.S. adults spiked. The pandemic threw lives into disarray as people worked from home and children learned via a computer. Adults reported a jump in depressive symptoms from 8.5% before the pandemic to 27.8%, according to a study from Boston University. A follow-up study by Boston University in 2021 shows this higher rate of depression has persisted and worsened. Now, nearly 33%, or 1 in every 3 U.S. adults report symptoms of depression, the study indicates. The staff at NAMI Stark County saw worsening mental health symptoms and an increase in those with anxiety or depression as the pandemic progressed. People who didn't have a mental illness developed anxiety or depression following the outbreak of COVID-19. These trends have grown as the pandemic continues without an end in sight. "I can only speak for me." Robin Holland from NAMI Stark County wrote, "I think people are tired of being stressed or anxious about this virus and are just exhausted. I think so many of us are feeling very lonely, especially working from home. From greeting someone with a fist or elbow bump to asking if family members were vaccinated for a holiday gathering, the pandemic added a layer of anxiety to most interactions, she said. To cope with the stress, anxiety and depression of the COVID-19 pandemic, Holland encourages people to think about what they can control. It's impossible to control the virus itself or how other people act, she said, but anyone can wear a mask and social distance. Physical activities like yoga or hobbies that allow the body and mind to decompress can also help, she said. "One thing that I highly encourage is for everyone to find someone they can talk to, whether it's a good day or a bad day," Holland said. Of course, this is easier said than done, so Holland encourages those suffering to seek help for any and all forms of anxiety, stress and depression. Going to the doctor for anxiety and depression should be as easy as going for diabetes or high blood pressure.

MENTAL HEALTH AND COPING DURING CORONAVIRUS

REACTIONS YOU MAY FEEL INCLUDE:

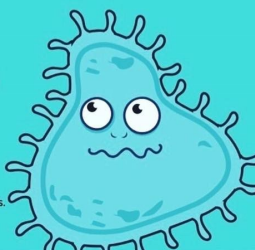
- Fear and worry about your own health status and that of your loved ones.
- Changes in sleep or eating patterns.
- Difficulty concentrating.
- Worsening of chronic health problems.
- Increased use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs.

TAKING CARE OF YOUR WELLBEING:

- Connect with people
- Decide on your routine
- Try to keep active
- Keep your mind stimulated
- Take care with news and information
- Find ways to relax and be creative

THINGS YOU CAN DO TO SUPPORT YOURSELF:

- Avoid excessive exposure to media coverage of Coronavirus.
- Take care of your body. Take deep breaths, stretch or meditate. Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals, exercise regularly, get plenty of sleep and avoid alcohol and drugs.
- Make time to unwind and remind yourself that strong feelings will fade.
- Connect with others and share your concerns and how you are feeling with friends or family members.
- Maintain healthy relationships.
- Maintain a sense of hope and positive thinking.



See page 7 for article on PTSD



Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)





It's winter in Ohio! Shorter days, less sunshine and on top of that, COVID isolation.

Seasonal Affective Disorder, or SAD is a type of mood disorder associated with seasonal changes. Commonly seen as depression arising during the winter months. It happens due to a disturbance in the circadian system

Very common (More than 3 million cases per year in US), Treatable by a medical professional, Often requires lab test or imaging, Can last several months or years, Common for ages 18-35, More common in females, Family history may increase likelihood

Symptoms

Most cases of SAD begin during late fall or early winter and go away during spring or summer. Some cases may be reported during spring and summer. Winter SAD and summer SAD show similar and different symptoms including

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Feeling depressed on most of the days, during the season | Sadness |
| Loss of concentration and interest in activities | Reduced energy |
| Feelings of worthlessness or hopelessness | Trouble sleeping/oversleeping |
| Weight loss/weight gain | Suicidal thoughts |
| Nausea, loss of appetite/craving for fatty or carbohydrate rich foods | |

Common tests & procedures

Blood test: May be recommended to determine the blood cell counts, check for infections, or other medical conditions such as thyroid problems.

Psychological examination: Mental health professionals use question-answer type tools for evaluating and assessing the patient's disorder.

Treatment

Light therapy, medications, and psychotherapy are the treatments available for SAD. It is important to let the doctor know of your other medical conditions, including bipolar disorder, to avoid any side effects from any of the medications or therapies.

Self-care

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Keep your house well lit | Sit closer to bright windows both at home and in office |
| Take a walk outside each day | Exercise regularly |
| Eat a well balanced diet | Stick to your treatment plan |
| Practice relaxation techniques | Practice music or art therapy |

Nutrition/Foods to eat: Vitamin D rich foods: e.g. fatty fish such as salmon, tuna, sardines, rainbow trout, fish oil, fortified milk, egg yolk. Foods rich in omega 3 fatty acids: e.g. oily, fatty fish such as mackerel, herring, salmon, sardines, anchovies, flaxseed, hemp, canola, and walnut oils. Berries: e.g. blueberries, raspberries, strawberries Foods rich in folic acid: e.g. leafy greens, oatmeal, sunflower seeds, oranges, fortified cereals, lentils, blackeyed peas, and soybeans

Foods to avoid: Sugary foods

HHS Announces Critical Investments to Implement Upcoming 988 Dialing Code for National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

The Department of Health and Human Services, through its Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), will make critical investments in suicide prevention and crisis care services, announcing \$282 million to help transition the [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) exit disclaimer icon from its current 10-digit number to a three-digit dialing code – 988. The 988 dialing code will be available nationally for call, text or chat beginning in July 2022.

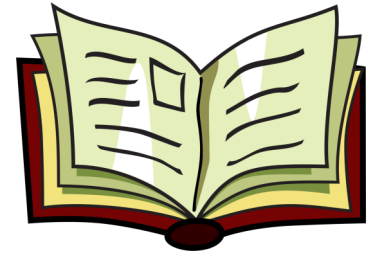
Meaningful Recovery from Schizophrenia and Serious Mental Illness with Clozapine

by Ann Mandel Laitman, M.D.

Daniel Laitman, B.A.

Lewis A. Opler, M.D. , Ph.D.

Robert S. Laitman, M.D.



Mental Health Book Corner

By Steve Pryce

Meaningful Recovery tells the story of Daniel Laitman, who survives schizophrenia with the help of his parents, both of whom are physicians, and the medication Clozapine. Daniel was able to graduate college with honors and become a comedian in New York City. His story is told by the perspectives of his mother, himself and his dad. Dr. Lewis Opler, who studied at Harvard University and the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, explains the development of anti-psychotic medication and the success of patients with Clozapine.

According to Dr. Lewis Opler, Clozapine is considered to be the first atypical antipsychotic drug. It is effective in treating psychosis and decreasing rates of suicide and recreational drug use. It also does not cause Tardive dyskinesia, or involuntary movements of the face and body. However, it requires blood tests to monitor white blood cell count. Elevated white blood cell counts can lead to agranulocytosis and death, though the risk is small. The drug is less commonly used in the United States than in other countries.

Daniel began experiencing symptoms of schizophrenia in the tenth grade. His mother said he was always a “great and different kid all his life,” but began hearing voices at summer camp. He also missed meals and worried he was “losing his soul.” Abilify, Seroquel, Geoden, Invega and Cogentin were all prescribed, but none relieved all the symptoms. Doctors increased the dosages, which didn’t help. Side effects, such as a stiff right arm, became worse.

Fortunately, their parents’ neighbor had a friend who was researcher at McLean Hospital in Boston. She suggested Clozapine, but Ann and Robert worried about the weekly blood tests. Daniel was also experiencing weight gain and gender identity issues, which his parents believed were a result of the psychosis. So, they stopped his current medication and began Clozapine.

Daniel was then able to complete high school, community college and college with a degree in Screenwriting and Playwriting. Due to his diagnosis, he decided not to get his driver’s license. He has an apartment in New York City and is a comedian, with some support from his parents. He states “Clozapine is the drug that saved my life. While that may seem hyperbole I can assure you it is not.”

Robert Laitman, his father and a marathon runner, has become an advocate for the use of Clozapine. He works with a group of patients to improve outcomes of those with schizophrenia. They use a biopsychosocial approach that utilizes wrap-around care. He states “my wife and I were dismayed by the low expectations of the psychiatric community . . . “ He hopes more is possible in the future.

2022 Schedule Education Schedule

All classes will be held via ZOOM until further notice

NAMI Basics

6-week course for parents of school- aged children affected by mental diagnosis such as autism, AD/HD, depression, etc. It is taught by trained parents.

Wednesday	January 26 - March 2, 2022	6:00 - 8:00 pm
Wednesday	April 27 - June 1, 2022	6:00 - 8:00 pm
Wednesday	July 27 - August 31, 2022	6:00 - 8:00 pm
Wednesday	October 26 - November 30, 2022	6:00 - 8:00 pm

NAMI Family to Family

8-week course for family members and other support people affected by a loved one's mental health. It is taught by trained family members.

Tuesday	March 22 - May 10, 2022	6:00 - 8:30 pm
Saturday	April 16 - June 4, 2022	10:00 - 12:30 pm
Tuesday	May 31 - July 19, 2022	6:00 - 8:30 pm
Tuesday	August 9 - September 27, 2022	6:00 - 8:30 pm
Tuesday	October 11 - November 29, 2022	6:00 - 8:30 pm

NAMI Peer to Peer

8-week course for individuals living with a mental health condition. It is taught by trained peers.

Thursday	January 20 - March 10, 2022	6:00 - 8:00 pm
Thursday	March 31 - May 19, 2022	6:00 - 8:00 pm
Thursday	June 9 - July 28, 2022	6:00 - 8:00 pm
Saturday	July 9 - August 27, 2022	10:00 -12:00 pm
Thursday	August 18 - October 6, 2022	6:00 - 8:00 pm
Thursday	October 20 - December 8, 2022	6:00 - 8:00 pm

No charge for class, but you must be pre-registered to take a class. To register, please call 330-455-6264 or email Sheryl Falcone at sfalcone@namistarkcounty.org

Why Join a NAMI Support Group?

Mental illness can be extremely isolating and it's not uncommon to lose friends along the way. This is a chance to meet new people — people who truly know what it's like to have gone through similar issues. Some people in group may become someone you get to exchange pleasantries with each week. Others though, you may begin to see beyond group and become friends.

Support Groups are FREE to attend; NO registration is required.

Virtual NAMI Stark County Support Groups using [Zoom.com](https://zoom.us)

Join by computer Zoom.com Enter meeting #

Or

Smartphone Download Zoom app Enter meeting #

Or

Call in 1-646-558-8656 Enter meeting #

Plan to join 10 – 15 minutes before start time

NAMI Stark County Sunday Night Support Group (Peers and Family Members)

7:00 PM – Group meets weekly Sunday

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/798097665>

Meeting ID: 798 097 665

NAMI Stark County Tuesday Peer Support Group (Adults with Mental Illness)

7:00 PM – Group meets weekly Tuesday

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/97629915727>

Meeting ID: 976 2991 5727

NAMI Stark County Friday Peer Support Group (Adults with Mental Illness)

7:00 PM – Group meets weekly Friday

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/386459766>

Meeting ID: 386 459 766



**ANYONE.
ANYWHERE.
CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE.**

BE THE 1 TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE 



**Mental Health
FIRST AID**

from NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR
MENTAL WELLBEING

New Name! Updated Program!



**Mental Health
FIRST AID**

from NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR
MENTAL WELLBEING

Same 8 hour certification program done virtually!

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) is more than just a training program – in addition to teaching First Aiders how to identify, understand and respond to signs and symptoms of a mental health or substance use challenge, it emphasizes the importance of self-care, provides facts about mental health, and encourages you to #BeTheDifference where and when you can. This may look like checking in with a coworker, reaching out to a family member or just supporting a friend who has been having a hard time.

Classes are Free!

We do have a \$25 NO SHOW policy. You must cancel at least 24 hours before class or you will be charged.

Mental Health First Aid Adult

Wednesday February 2, 2022 9:00 am – 4:00 pm
Wednesday April 6, 2022 9:00 am – 4:00 pm
Wednesday June 1, 2022 9:00 am – 4:00 pm
Wednesday August 3, 2022 9:00 am – 4:00 pm
Wednesday October 5, 2022 9:00 am – 4:00 pm
Wednesday December 7, 2022 9:00 am – 4:00 pm

Mental Health First Aid Youth

Wednesday March 2, 2022 9:00 am – 4:00 pm
Wednesday May 4, 2022 9:00 am – 4:00 pm
Wednesday July 6, 2022 9:00 am – 4:00 pm
Wednesday September 7, 2022 9:00 am – 4:00 pm
Wednesday November 2, 2022 9:00 am – 4:00 pm



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National Alliance on Mental Illness

Stark County

Call 330-455-6264 or email
rholland@namistarkcounty.org
to register

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a mental health condition that's triggered by a terrifying event — either experiencing it or witnessing it. Symptoms may include flashbacks, nightmares and severe anxiety, as well as uncontrollable thoughts about the event. Most people who go through traumatic events may have temporary difficulty adjusting and coping, but with time and good self-care, they usually get better. If the symptoms get worse, last for months or even years, and interfere with your day-to-day functioning, you may have PTSD. Getting effective treatment after PTSD symptoms develop can be critical to reduce symptoms and improve function. Post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms may start within one month of a traumatic event, but sometimes symptoms may not appear until years after the event. These symptoms cause significant problems in social or work situations and in relationships. They can also interfere with your ability to go about your normal daily tasks. Symptoms may include:

- Recurrent, unwanted distressing memories of the traumatic event
- Reliving the traumatic event as if it were happening again (flashbacks)
- Upsetting dreams or nightmares about the traumatic event
- Severe emotional distress or physical reactions to something that reminds you of the traumatic event
- Trying to avoid thinking or talking about the traumatic event
- Avoiding places, activities or people that remind you of the traumatic event
- Negative thoughts about yourself, other people or the world
- Memory problems, including not remembering important aspects of the traumatic event
- Self-destructive behavior, such as drinking too much or driving too fast
- Difficulty maintaining close relationships
- Feeling detached from family and friends
- Difficulty experiencing positive emotions
- Being easily startled or frightened
- Trouble sleeping
- Irritability, angry outbursts or aggressive behavior
- Hopelessness about the future
- Lack of interest in activities you once enjoyed
- Feeling emotionally numb
- Always being on guard for danger
- Trouble concentrating
- Overwhelming guilt or shame

Getting help is hard to accept, but rewarding. Call a mental health provider today

Do you know who to call if a behavioral health crisis occurs?

9-1-1 and ask for a Crisis Intervention Team (C.I.T.) trained officer

Stark County Crisis Hotline: 330-452-6000 or National Suicide Hotline: 1-800-273-8255

National and Ohio Crisis Text Line: Text 4HOPE to 741741 [Veterans can also text to 838255]

Opiate Helpline: 330-454-HELP (4357)

Homeless Hotline: 330-452-4363

Domestic Violence Helpline: 330-453-SAFE (7233)

Trevor Lifeline for LGBTQ Youth: 1-866-488-7386

Coleman Crisis Youth and Adult

Mobile Response Units:

330-452-6000

 **NAMI** Stark County
National Alliance on Mental Illness

The County's Voice on Mental Illness
121 Cleveland Ave., S.W.
Canton, OH 44702



Stark County

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