Recognise the signs

Learn to recognise the signs of poor mental health in yourself and in your friends and family. These signs include:

- changes in sleeping or eating patterns
- being angry for no reason
- feeling anxious, worried or overwhelmed by problems
- finding it hard to concentrate and make decisions.

Talk about it

Ignoring mental health problems in yourself or in others won't make them go away. In fact, it can make them worse. Talk to someone you trust about how you're feeling.

Ask for help

Poor mental health affects more people than you'd think – at least one in five in Northern Ireland. While common conditions such as stress, anxiety and 'feeling down' are normal, if you feel like that for long periods of time you may have a mental health problem you need help with.

You can go to the doctor, or contact one of the many organisations that can help.

For more information log on to
www.mindingyourhead.info
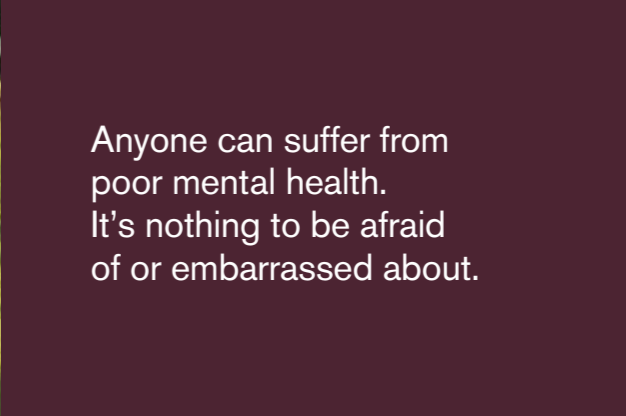
The pocket guide to good mental health

Anyone can suffer from poor mental health. It's nothing to be afraid of or embarrassed about.

HSC Public Health Agency

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

www.publichealth.hscni.net

02/11

What is good mental health?

Good mental health is feeling positive about yourself, being able to cope with everyday pressures and being able to form and maintain relationships.

Good mental health is just as important as good physical health, and in fact poor mental health can lead to poor physical health.

The good news is there's a whole lot you can do for your mental health.

Keep active

Regular physical activity can help you feel more positive. Find something you enjoy, like swimming, cycling, the gym or even just going for a walk. It'll be worth the effort and will help you feel better.

Get involved

Going out and mixing with other people will help you stop focusing on your worries and fears. Join a club, meet up with friends, do a course, learn something new. Don't spend long periods alone. After a while your worries and fears won't seem so overwhelming.

Accept yourself

Remember, we're all different and nobody's perfect. Accepting who you are is an important part of good mental health.

Relax

Make time to relax and unwind, watch TV, read a magazine or book, listen to music, whatever helps you switch off. It's also important to get a good night's sleep.

Using alcohol or drugs to relax won't make things better, and can add to your problems.

Eat healthily

A healthy, balanced diet will help you feel better and give you more energy.