

Mayo Clinic Minute: Mental health needs rise as pandemic fluctuates

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As COVID-19 infection cases continue to fluctuate, one area that medical experts continue to see an increased need for is mental health care.

Primary care physicians are often the first stop for many patients who seek help with their mental health. Dr. Jay-Sheree Allen, a family medicine physician at Mayo Clinic, says that's one of the main reasons patients are making appointments.

"We're seeing a lot in the primary care setting now related to mental health issues, particularly [major depressive disorder](#), generalized anxiety disorder and post-traumatic stress disorder."

Dr. Allen explains how one might feel with these symptoms—"loss of interest in things that you once enjoyed, feeling very hopeless, feeling very sad."

The pandemic has had a rippling effect on mental health. It brought isolation, and grief of lives lost and lives changed.

"People who couldn't go to graduations, who postponed weddings, whose marriages fell apart during this time. I think there's a lot of grief that's driving some of these increased numbers of mental health diagnoses," says Dr. Allen.

As people continue to seek medical help, Dr. Allen says there is something we can do for each other.

"We need to offer each other grace. One of my favorite quotes is: 'Be kind because everyone is fighting a battle you know nothing about.'"

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