

Thinking about talking to your primary care doctor or another health provider about making a mental healthcare plan? Prepare for your appointment — and to know what to expect when you get there. Here's what to know.

## Before your appointment: Tracking your mental and physical feelings

About a week before your appointment, start paying close attention to how you're feeling during the day. Think about questions like these a few times during the day or stop and think back on the whole day before going to bed. It might be helpful to make some notes each day that you can refer to when talking to your care team. Consider using the daily tracker on page 3.

Track your feelings	Track your energy and focus	Track your body
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Are you feeling calm and focused, or are you anxious, restless or stressed?</li><li>• Are you feeling sad or hopeless?</li><li>• Are you feeling angry or irritable?</li><li>• Are you isolating yourself from other people?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do you have your normal level of energy, or are you feeling tired or listless?</li><li>• Are you having trouble with focus or concentration? Does your mind wander? Are you overexcited?</li><li>• Are you maintaining your normal level of interest in your typical activities, like hobbies and socializing?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Is your appetite normal, or are you eating more or less than usual?</li><li>• Are you sleeping well, or are you sleeping less or more than normal?</li><li>• Do you have any unusual physical symptoms you can't explain, like headaches or back pain?</li></ul>



When you visit your primary care provider, it's your chance to talk to them about what you're feeling. Be honest — the more information you give them, the more likely it is they can help.



## Get the conversation started

You could say something like, “I’m here because I haven’t been feeling mentally at my best lately, and I want to talk to you about whether mental health medication might help me.”

## Talk about your feelings

Tell your doctor what kinds of changes in your mood you’ve noticed. Are you depressed? Anxious? Angry? Fearful? Are the feelings constant, or do they change during the day?

## Discuss ways your life is affected

Explain how your mood changes impact your life. Do they interfere with your responsibilities at work or at home? Interrupt your concentration? Do you have trouble sleeping?

## Ask questions

Possible questions might include: Do you think my feelings might be caused by depression or anxiety? Would my family medical history impact my diagnosis? How can I take control of my symptoms and improve my mood? Do you recommend prescription medication? Therapy or counseling? A combination? Should I talk to my spouse/partner, my children, or my friends about this? How do I start the conversation?

## After your appointment: Follow your care plan

Have more questions after your visit? Call your provider to find the answers. If you have a Geisinger doctor, you can message them directly through the MyChart app. And be sure to follow any care or treatment plans they developed for you.

**Remember:** If you’re having thoughts of death, suicide or self-harm, or if you feel you’re in crisis, don’t wait. Contact the National Suicide Hotline by dialing **988** or dial **911** if you need immediate help.

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
Day of week (e.g., Monday)							
<b>Today overall</b>							
On a 1–10 scale, with 10 the best, how was your mood today?							
<b>Your feelings today</b>							
Did you feel anxious?							
Did you feel depressed or sad?							
Did you feel stressed or tense?							
Did you feel isolated or lonely?							
<b>Your energy and focus today</b>							
Was your energy level normal, or was it unusually low or high?							
Did you feel tired or fatigued?							
Did you have trouble concentrating?							
<b>Your body today</b>							
Was your appetite normal, or was it higher or lower than usual?							
Did you get your typical amount of sleep, or did you sleep less or more than usual?							
Did you have any physical symptoms, like headaches or back pain?							