



# Recognize the Signs of Anxiety and Depression in Employees

## For Managers and HR Leaders

As a manager or HR professional, you are constantly on the lookout for new and effective ways to keep your staff healthy and happy. That's why Homewood Pathfinder has put together this handy tip sheet to help you recognize the signs of anxiety and depression in your employees.

### What are Anxiety and Depression?

Though symptoms of anxiety and depression can overlap, they are two distinct mental health disorders that may require differing treatments. It is best to understand both

issues so that employees get the appropriate resources and level of care.

Anxiety is characterized by excessive thoughts and feelings, or irrational fear and worry about a perceived danger or a potential failure.

Depression is the most common mental health disorder and is defined as a severe state of despondency and dejection. Simply put, depression is characterized by low spirits resulting from feelings of hopelessness.

# 1 in 5

Canadians experience depression, anxiety or posttraumatic stress disorder



## What does Anxiety look like?

Though different from typical stress, which is a normal reaction to a change or challenge, an employee might suffer from anxiety if they exhibit these traits:

- Catastrophizing, e.g. blowing things out of proportion
- Expecting the worst, e.g. feeling a sense of pessimism or impending doom
- Irritability
- Irrational fear or worry
- Persistent nervousness
- Physical symptoms, such as sweating, trembling, or rapid breathing

### Or, these changes in behaviour:

- Increased smoking, use of drugs and alcohol
- Crying often
- Sleep disturbances
- Eating patterns
- Avoiding other people
- Being argumentative or abusive
- Unusually poor hygiene

## How to give your employees the help they need

If you're concerned that an employee is suffering from a mood disorder like anxiety or depression, you can provide them with one or more of the following resources:

- Counselling from an Employee Assistance or Mental Health program
- Nutrition, sleep and fitness information to promote healthy choices
- One-on-one chat about potential issues in their role or organization

**16%**

of working  
Canadians say  
their workplace contributes  
to feelings of depression and anxiety



## Treatment Options

If an employee is open to counselling, a referral to your company's Employee Assistance or Mental Health program can help them:

- Relieve unhappy symptoms
- Improve their mood
- Return to normal functioning at work, home, and in social situations
- Reduce the likelihood of a recurring low mood or anxious thoughts

Recognizing and treating an employee's mood disorder can be an emotionally demanding process, which is why you should also seek support from healthcare providers. This will ensure that you have the resources you need to help not only your employees but also yourself.

To learn more about Homewood Pathfinder's Employee Assistance and Mental Health services, please visit:

<https://homewoodpathfinder.com/>