



Seeking Mental Health Care as an Officer

As officers, we may encounter stress or trauma in our personal life, on the job, and on deployment.

Recognizing the toll that these stressors can take on you and intervening early can get you back on track to a happier and healthier life.

Warning signs¹:

- Excessive worry
- Sleeping too little or too much
- Increased irritability or anger
- Less desire to socialize
- Decreased sex drive
- Large mood swings
- Substance abuse
- Ongoing aches and pains
- Eating too much or too little
- Less care of physical appearance/hygiene
- Loss of interest in activities/work
- Feelings of hopelessness, loss of meaning

Untreated mental health illness can lead to or worsen²:

- Strained relationships
- Missed work or poor work performance
- Suicidal thoughts
- Reckless behavior
- Poor physical health
- Substance addiction
- Financial instability
- More severe mental health illnesses
- Longer, more difficult treatment

Who to call:

- Corps Care*: 240-276-9616
- Tricare West: 844-866-9378
- Tricare East: 800-444-5445
- Federal Occupational Health/Employee Assistance Program: 800-457-9808
- Employee Assistance Programs through your duty station
- Walk-in outpatient behavioral health clinics on military bases

*Corps Care is a program designed to support officers, give them training in resiliency, and direct them to mental health resources.

Will seeking mental health treatment affect my standing as an officer?

- “Corps Care operates separately from Medical Affairs...information is not shared with Medical Affairs unless the officer gives consent...”³
- “Behavioral health conditions are no different than medical conditions. Officers who develop any acute health condition are afforded a reasonable period of time to get the condition fully treated or stabilized. If after [this], it appears that an officer cannot...perform his/her ‘day job’ ...then a medical fitness-for-duty evaluation will be considered.”⁴
- “Behavioral health conditions that result in breaks with reality or severe mood swings may...result in a more expedited fitness-for-duty evaluation.”⁴

1. <https://www.nami.org/Learn-More/Know-the-Warning-Signs>
2. <https://www.constellationbehavioralhealth.com/blog/the-real-cost-of-untreated-mental-illness-in-america/>
3. LCDR Kimberly (Shay) Litton-Belcher, Psy.D., Corps Care Program Manager
4. Dr. Barry Simon, Chief of Medical Affairs