

# Healthy Pathways



## Heads Up: Mental Health and Men

**M**en face unique health challenges, but their behaviors often hinder their own well-being. They are less likely than women to visit a doctor regularly or get preventive care. Additionally, men tend to engage in riskier behaviors, such as smoking, excessive alcohol consumption, and neglecting mental health issues. If you are a man, recognize that societal norms often pressure men to “tough it out,” thereby discouraging them from seeking help or admitting vulnerabilities. Don’t fall for it. Make health a priority so those you love—not just you—benefit. Consider:

- 1) Redefine “strength” as taking control of your well-being.
- 2) Recognize that detecting and treating health conditions early will help you avoid fear, worry, and expense.
- 3) Don’t view mental health issues like depression, stress, and anxiety as “not physical” and therefore best handled with denial and minimalization.
- 4) Let go of this myth: “Feeling fine means I don’t need to see a doctor.” Many serious conditions show no noticeable symptoms until they reach middle or late stages, when treatment becomes more challenging and may no longer be effective.
- 5) Don’t depend on a partner or spouse to track your health needs or schedule appointments. Make it a nonnegotiable part of your life routine, just like car maintenance.
- 6) Choose a medical doctor you feel at ease with, so you won’t hesitate to ask questions about your health, even those that feel sensitive or embarrassing.

Learn more: [texashealth.org](https://www.texashealth.org) [search: “study reveals”]



## Combat Workplace Loneliness

**W**orkplace loneliness refers to feeling disconnected and emotionally detached from coworkers despite being surrounded by people all day. If you feel like you are simply “going through the motions” at work, lacking meaningful social connections, and experiencing a diminished desire to engage or collaborate on projects, this sense of feeling invisible or undervalued can harm productivity and mental health. Loneliness can happen when social connections don’t meet our personal needs, even in busy office settings. This often includes feeling like you can’t be your true self, which makes it seem like no one really knows who you are. A recent survey found one in five employees feels lonely on a typical workday. Try this engagement fix: Be deliberate about building relationships with coworkers rather than leaving it all up to chance. Initiate conversations and show genuine interest in others’ experiences. Look for common interests to discuss. Invite a colleague for coffee or lunch. Small efforts to connect with others can make your workplace feel more supportive and reduce feelings of loneliness. Consider the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for tips and support on feeling more connected at work. Remember, too, feelings of loneliness can sometimes be associated with depression. The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) can help determine whether this is a factor in your experience of isolation at work.



INOVA EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

TOLL-FREE: 800-346-0110  
[www.inova.org/eap](http://www.inova.org/eap)



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