



Comorbidities Reference Guide to Support Integrated Health Care

Summary of prevalent medical and behavioral health conditions

We recognize that practicing whole health care can be challenging. It places the onus on providers to have expertise across every patient's medical, mental health and substance use disorders. Primary care practitioners, practices such as health homes and accountable care organizations are necessary to help ensure individuals receive coordinated care across different areas of health care.

This guide is meant to assist medical and behavioral health practitioners in providing holistic health care to their patients with co-occurring conditions. For additional information on treating these conditions, please review:

- **Behavioral Health:** [Optum Clinical Practice Guidelines](#)
- **Medical and Behavioral Health:** [National Clinical Practice Guidelines](#)

These guidelines apply to UnitedHealthcare Community Plan in the following states:

Arizona	Florida	Louisiana	Nebraska	Pennsylvania
California	Hawai'i	Maryland	New Jersey	Rhode Island
Colorado	Idaho	Massachusetts	New Mexico	Tennessee
Delaware	Indiana	Michigan	New York	Texas
District of Columbia	Iowa	Minnesota	North Carolina	Virginia
Georgia	Kansas	Mississippi	Ohio	Washington
	Kentucky	Missouri	Oklahoma	Wisconsin

Questions?

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Resources for Prevention and Early Identification

There are a number of resources that provide health and wellness information to prevent or improve the prognosis of many chronic medical and behavioral health conditions.

Health and Wellness

- US Department of Veterans Affairs [Healthy Living portal](#)
- [Health.gov](#)
- [Mental Health America](#)
- [National Alliance on Mental Illness](#)
- [National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion](#)
- [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#)
- [Stand Together](#)

Condition-Specific Information and Support

- [Arthritis](#)
- [Cancer](#)
- [Diabetes](#)
- [Heart Disease](#)
- [Human Immunodeficiency Virus \(HIV\)](#)
- [Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities](#)
- [Mental Health](#)
- [Pediatric Developmental Delays](#)
- [Substance Use Disorders](#)

Prevalent Medical and Behavioral Health Conditions

Disorder	National Prevalence	Onset age	Specialist	What is it?	Physical	Behavioral	Assessment	Reference links
Alcohol Use Disorder	10.6%	Late teens to mid-20's	Licensed substance use provider or mental health provider with substance abuse expertise	Compulsive use of alcohol despite adverse consequences and physiological dependence on alcohol as indicated by evidence of tolerance or symptoms of withdrawal	Memory lapses, physical injuries due to violence and/or accidents, unkept, weight fluctuation due to neglect in eating, shaking in the morning, dementia, nerve damage, delirium tremens	Depression, anxiety, stressful lifestyle, low self-esteem, interpersonal conflict, neglect of responsibilities, legal problems, violence	AUDIT-C, M-SASQ, CRAFFT (youth), MAST-G (older adults), or TWEAK (pregnant women)	Medline Plus Alcohol Use Disorder
Alcohol Withdrawal		Adults	Licensed substance use provider or mental health provider with substance abuse expertise	Maladaptive behavioral change, with physiological and cognitive concomitants, due to cessation or reduction of prolonged, heavy alcohol ingestion	Clammy skin, headache, insomnia, dilated pupils, loss of appetite, rapid heartbeat, sweating, pallor, tremors, nausea, vomiting, agitation, seizures, delirium tremens	Anxiety, depression, fatigue, irritability, difficulty thinking clearly, rapid emotional changes, possible delirium	CIWA	Medline Plus Alcohol Withdrawal
Asthma	8.3%	Relatively young	Asthma Specialist	Chronic lung disease that inflames and narrows the airways	Coughing, wheezing, tightness in the chest, shortness of breath	Depression, Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Learning Disabilities	Spirometry	NIH - Asthma
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)	8-10% (children); 4-5% (adults)	Relatively young	Licensed mental health provider	Persistent pattern of inattention and/or hyperactivity-impulsivity more frequent or severe than comparable population	No specific physical features; may have higher rates of accidental injuries	Higher risk of tobacco, alcohol and/or drug dependence. Low self-esteem, interpersonal and academic problems	VADPRS, CSHCN Screener	NIH - ADHD
Autism Spectrum Disorder	~3% (children); ~2% (adults)	Prior to age 3 years	Licensed mental health provider, preferably a specialist in working with this population (e.g., Behavioral Analyst)	Markedly abnormal or impaired development in social interaction and communication and a markedly restricted repertoire of activity and interests	Poor eye contact and interpersonal skill, stereotyped body movements including hands or whole body; Likes routine and dislikes change; Evidence of self-injurious behaviors; Possible seizures, microcephaly or macrocephaly	Frequent associated diagnosis of Intellectual Disability; Depression in adolescence & early adulthood	CSHCN Screener	NIH – Autism Spectrum Disorder

Disorder	National Prevalence	Onset age	Specialist	What is it?	Physical	Behavioral	Assessment	Reference links
Bipolar Disorder	4.4%	Average age of onset is 20 for men and women	Licensed mental health provider	Cycles of mania (or mixed) episodes and major depressive episodes	Depends on type of episode; Mania - excessive energy, more talkative and decreased need for sleep; See Depressive Episode below	Depends on type of episode; Mania - flight of ideas, distractible, increase in goal-directed activity, inflated self-esteem; Depressive: see Depressive Episode below	BSDS, CMRS-P (youth), ADAMS (individuals with I/DD), MARS-12 (optional to assess recovery)	NIH – Bipolar Disorder
Cancer	Varies by the type of cancer	Increases with age	Oncologist	Tissue growth out of control somewhere in the body	Varies with site, weakness, pain, anorexia, malaise	Depression, anxiety, delirium, suicidal ideas, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), alcohol and/or nicotine abuse	Radiological & biochemical tests, biopsy	American Cancer Society
Cerebrovascular Accident	3.1%	Increases with age	Neurologist	Death of brain tissue due to blockage of artery	Focal neurological symptoms, agnosia, amnesia, aphasia, apraxia	Various cognitive disorders, personality change, depression, mania, psychosis	CT scan, MRI	Healthline - Cerebrovascular Accident
Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)	5.6%	40s to 60s	Internist	Loss of elasticity and absorptive surface area of the lung	Shortness of breath, cough, dusky skin hue, headache, tremor	Anxiety, panic attacks, depression, insomnia, delirium, dementia, nicotine abuse	Pulmonary function studies (spirometry), blood gas determinations	Medline - COPD
Conduct Disorder	9.5%	Middle childhood to middle adolescence	Licensed mental health provider	Repetitive/persistent pattern of behavior in which the basic rights of others or major age-appropriate societal norms or rules are violated	Greater risk for sexually transmitted diseases, unplanned pregnancies, and physical injuries for accidents or fights	Risk of alcohol and/or drug dependence, suicide attempts/completions, little empathy toward others	CSHCN Screener	AACAP - Conduct Disorder
Congestive Heart Failure	1-2% in middle age; 2-3% over 65; 5-10% over 75	Increases with age	Cardiologist	Heart disease or arrhythmia causes the heart to lose pumping efficiency	Shortness of breath, weakness, fatigue, edema, cyanosis, cold extremities	Anxiety, panic attacks, depression, insomnia, delirium	Chest x-ray, echocardiogram	NIH - Congestive Heart Failure
Delirium	Less than 1%	Increases with age	Neurologist or Geriatrician	Disturbance of consciousness and a change in cognition that develop over a short period of time	Varies based on etiology, many are restless or hyperactive with difficulty in speech, impaired ability to write, and aphasia	Reduced clarity of awareness of environment; ability to focus, sustain, or shift attention is impaired	Mini-Cog or SIS	Medline Plus - Delirium

Disorder	National Prevalence	Onset age	Specialist	What is it?	Physical	Behavioral	Assessment	Reference links
Dementia	Less than 1%	Increases with age	Neurologist or Geriatrician	Multiple cognitive deficits that include impairment in memory	Deterioration of language functioning (aphasia); with progression of illness, can become mute, exhibit apraxia, and vulnerable to physical stressors	Aphasia, apraxia, agnosia, and/or a disturbance in executive functioning that impacts one or more areas of functioning	Mini-Cog or SIS	Medline Plus - Dementia
Depressive Episode		No age bias	Licensed mental health provider	Period of at least two weeks during which there is either depressed mood or the loss of interest or pleasure in nearly all activities	Significant weight loss or weight gain, psychomotor agitation or retardation, and fatigue or loss of energy	Depressed mood most of the day/most days, diminished interest/pleasure (marked), feelings of worthlessness, recurrent thoughts of death, suicide risk	PHQ-2 and/or PHQ-9 or Cornell Depression Screener or GDS; SDS (optional); MARS-12 (optional to assess recovery)	American Psychiatric Association - What is depression?
Developmental Disabilities	Less than 1% in the total population; 1 in 6 children	Typically diagnosed in childhood	Varies with diagnosis	Developmental disabilities is a term representative of a group of disorders with mental or physical impairments that arise before adulthood	Varies with diagnosis	Varies with diagnosis	CSHCN Screener	CDC - Developmental Disabilities Index
Diabetes Mellitus	11.3%	Bimodal; adolescence/ young adulthood and late life	Endocrinologist	Reduced insulin effectiveness or availability causes high blood sugar	Increased hunger, thirst, urine output, weight loss, arteriosclerosis	Panic attacks, depression, delirium	Fasting blood sugar test	American Diabetes Association
Down's Syndrome	Less than 1%	Genetically inherited at birth	Referral depends on the physical symptoms	Genetic condition where person has 47 chromosomes instead of usual 46	Early and massive vomiting, constipation, sleep apnea, eye problems (e.g., cataracts), hearing problems	Frustration, anger, poor impulse control, short attention span, poor judgment, Alzheimer's Type dementia	CSHCN Screener (children)	Medline Plus - Down's Syndrome
Generalized Anxiety Disorder	2.7%	No age bias	Licensed mental health provider	Excessive anxiety and worry occurring for more days than not, for at least 6 months, about a number of events and is difficult to control	Being easily fatigued and muscle tension	Restlessness, difficulty concentrating or mind going blank, irritability, and/or disturbed sleep	GAD-2 and/or GAD-7; ADAMS (individuals with I/DD), MARS-12 (optional, to assess recovery)	NIH - Anxiety Disorders

Disorder	National Prevalence	Onset age	Specialist	What is it?	Physical	Behavioral	Assessment	Reference links
Hemophilia	Less than 1%	Genetically inherited at birth; very rarely acquired	Hematologist; Hemophilia Treatment Centers (HTCs)	Rare bleeding disorder where blood does not clot normally	Excessive bleeding (internal and external), easy bruising	Anxiety, depression	Blood tests	NIH - Bleeding Disorders
HIV/AIDS	Less than 1%	Relatively young	Internist or Infectious Disease Specialist	AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome) is the lethal systemic disorder caused by HIV (human immunodeficiency virus)	Increased susceptibility to infection, numerous neurological symptoms, weakness, skin lesions	Dementia, depression, suicidal ideas, anxiety, delirium, apathy, psychosis, intravenous drug use	Serological tests	CDC - HIV
Hyperthyroidism	1.2%	20-40	Endocrinologist	Overactive thyroid gland produces excessive thyroid hormone	Goiter, bulging eyes, weakness, palpitations, hunger, weight loss, tremor, diarrhea, warm skin	Agitated or apathetic depression, anxiety, panic attacks, delirium, psychosis	Serum thyroxine (T4) level	Medline Plus - Hyperthyroidism Hyperthyroidism - American Thyroid Association
Hypothyroidism	4.6%	50-60	Endocrinologist	Thyroid produces too little hormone, so body processes generally slow down	Slow heartbeat, dry skin, hair loss, edema, weight gain, cold intolerance, goiter	Depression, suicidal ideas, mental slowing, apathetic personality change, dementia	Serum thyroxine (T4) level	Medline Plus - Hypothyroidism Hypothyroidism - American Thyroid Association
Kidney Failure	11.1%	Varies with cause	Nephrologist	Loss of ability of kidneys to filter waste products from blood	Uremia impacts nearly every organ in the body	Depression	Blood urea nitrogen, abdominal x-ray	Medline Plus - Kidney Failure National Kidney Foundation
Liver Failure	1.8%	Increases with age	Gastroenterologist	Inability of liver to clear metabolic waste from the bloodstream	Jaundice, weakness, fatigue, anorexia, red palms, spider angiomas, easy bruising, tremor, motor incoordination	Irritability, depression, delirium	Liver enzymes, anemia, serum bilirubin	Medline Plus - Liver Diseases
Opioid Use Disorder	Between 2% - 2.8%	Mid-20's	Licensed substance abuse provider or mental health provider with substance abuse expertise	Chronic use of opioids causing impairment in functioning and cognitive distress	Chronic constipation, nausea, sweating, shallow breathing, slurred speech, small pupils, sensitive to pain	Euphoria, social withdrawal, cravings, risky behaviors	DAST-10, NIDA Quick Screen, or CRAFT (youth)	Johns Hopkins - Opioid Use Disorder

Disorder	National Prevalence	Onset age	Specialist	What is it?	Physical	Behavioral	Assessment	Reference links
Panic Attack		No age bias, but onset bi-modal in late adolescence and mid-30s	Licensed mental health provider	Discrete period of intense fear or discomfort in the absence of real danger that is accompanied by at least 4-13 somatic/ cognitive symptoms	Palpitations, sweating, trembling/shaking, sensations of shortness of breath, feeling of choking, chest pain, nausea, and dizziness	Derealization or depersonalization, feeling of losing control, fear of dying, sense of imminent danger or impending doom and an urge to escape	GAD-2 and/or GAD-7; MARS-12 (optional to assess recovery)	Mayo Clinic - Panic attacks and panic disorders
Parkinson's Disease	Less than 1%	60 or later	Neurologist	Degenerative brain disease of uncertain etiology	Tremor, muscle rigidity, decreased mobility, masked facies, trouble walking	Depression, anxiety, dementia	Presence of typical symptoms	Parkinson's Foundation
								Medline Plus - Parkinson's
Posttraumatic Stress Disorder	5%	No age bias	Licensed mental health provider	Anxiety disorder with characteristic symptoms following exposure to an extreme traumatic stressor	Increased rates of somatic complaints and possibly general medical conditions	Painful guilt feelings, avoidance patterns, auditory hallucinations, paranoid ideations, depression, substance abuse, anxiety, dissociative episodes	PCL-5; PC-PTSD, ACE, CSDC-SF (youth)	National Center for PTSD
Rheumatoid Arthritis	Less than 1%	Onset between 25 and 55 years	Rheumatologist	Autoimmune disease where antibodies attack body joints causing inflammation and pain	Pain, swelling, stiffness and loss of functioning in body joints, fever, fatigue, red & puffy hands, hard bumps under skin near joints	Depression	Blood tests, x-rays	NIH - Rheumatoid Arthritis
Schizophrenia	Less than 1%	Onset between late teens and mid-30's	Licensed mental health provider	Disorder that lasts for at least six months and includes both active and negative symptoms	Physically awkward, neurological "soft signs" (left/right confusion, poor coordination or mirroring), and the potential for several medication side effects	Delusions, hallucinations, disorganized speech, grossly disorganized or catatonic behavior	Psychosis Screener, PSYRATS (individuals with I/DD), MARS-12 (optional to assess recovery)	NIH - Schizophrenia
Sickle Cell Anemia	Less than 1%	Genetically inherited at birth	Hematologist	Sickle shaped red blood cells that hinder flow in blood vessels	Pain, shortness of breath, fatigue, headache, pale skin, dizziness, cold in the feet and hands	Anxiety, depression	Blood tests	NIH - Sickle Cell Anemia

Disorder	National Prevalence	Onset age	Specialist	What is it?	Physical	Behavioral	Assessment	Reference links
Substance Intoxication		Varies by the 11 substance categories	Licensed substance abuse provider or mental health provider with substance abuse expertise	Development of reversible substance-specific syndrome due to the recent ingestion of (or exposure to) a substance	Varies with substance used; see link with specific substances for details	Varies with substance used, but can include or lead to psychosis, anxiety, delirium, mood and sleep disorders	DAST-10, NIDA Quick Screen, or CRAFFT (youth)	APA Dictionary of Psychology
Substance Use Disorders	21.9% of those 12 years and older	Varies by the 11 substance categories	Licensed substance abuse provider or mental health provider with substance abuse expertise	Maladaptive pattern of substance use manifested by recurrent and significant adverse consequences related to the repeated use of substances	Varies with substance used; see link with specific substances for details	Varies with substance used; see link with specific substances for details	DAST-10, NIDA Quick Screen, CRAFFT (youth), TWEAK (pregnant women)	Medline Plus - Substance Use Disorders
Substance Withdrawal		Varies by the 11 substance categories	Licensed substance abuse provider or mental health provider with substance abuse expertise	Development of a substance-specific maladaptive behavioral change, with physiological and cognitive concomitants, due to cessation or reduction of prolonged substance use	Varies with substance used; see link with specific substances for details	Varies with substance used, but can include or lead to psychosis, anxiety, mood and sleep disorders	DAST-10, NIDA Quick Screen, or CRAFFT (youth)	APA Dictionary of Psychology
Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)	Less than 1%	No age bias; occurs at time of head injury	Depends on severity and symptoms to be treated	Form of acquired brain injury occurs when a sudden trauma causes damage to the brain	Headache, confusion, lightheadedness, blurred vision, dizziness, tired eyes, ringing in ears, fatigue or lethargy; severe, repeated vomiting, nausea, convulsions, seizures	Mood changes, trouble with memory, concentration, attention and/or thinking	BTBIS	NIH - Traumatic Brain Injury

Abbreviation Key

AACAP	American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychology
APA	American Psychological Association
CDC	Centers for Disease Control & Prevention
NIH	National Institutes of Health