



# Newsletter

Contact us



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## May is Mental Health Awareness Month

**Since** 1949, May has been observed as National Mental Health Awareness Month, a time when advocates and activists across the country draw attention to, and attempt to reduce the stigma of, mental health issues. Mental illness touches all of us. Did you know?

- An estimated 26% of American adults - about 1 in 4 - suffer from a diagnosable mental disorder in any given year. This translates to roughly 57 million people.
- Mental disorders, especially depression, are the leading cause of disability in the U.S. and Canada.
- An estimated 5 million living Americans have attempted suicide, and on average, a suicide occurs every 17 minutes.

Many different conditions are recognized as psychiatric disorders; common categories of mental illness include:

- Anxiety disorders (i.e. generalized anxiety disorder, PTSD, OCD, phobias)
- Mood disorders (i.e. depression, mania, bipolar disorder)
- Psychotic disorders (i.e. Schizophrenia)
- Impulse control (i.e. ADHD)
- Substance abuse disorders
- Eating disorders (i.e. anorexia, bulimia)

The etiologies of mental illness are complex, but it is commonly understood that neurotransmitters play a role. This is why medications that alter levels of neurotransmitters in the synapse, including selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) such as Prozac and serotonin-norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors (SNRIs) such as Cymbalta, are utilized by clinicians to treat depression, anxiety and more. Testing neurotransmitter levels and treating identified imbalances with diet modification and targeted nutritional therapy can help your patients manage their mental illnesses, but the benefits may be greater than many of us realize.

It has been understood that the incidence, course and outcomes of chronic disease are influenced by mental illness, but we are also beginning to understand that the efficacy of interventions for mental illness are affected by the presence of chronic disease. There is extensive evidence associating mental illness and medical illnesses such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, obesity, asthma, epilepsy and cancer. This association is especially apparent among people with more serious and disabling mental

illness, who are at risk of dying 25 years prematurely from cardiovascular or other chronic diseases. Research suggests that this association exists not only because of higher rates of smoking and obesity or poor compliance with medical care, but also because of physiologic changes, including endothelial inflammation and platelet stickiness, as well as changes in the epinephrine-norepinephrine regulation and in cortisol metabolism.

Labrix offers a "combo kit" with testing options that include NeuroHormone Complete and NeuroHormone Complete Plus Panels, allowing you to test your patients' hormone **and** neurotransmitter levels for a comprehensive assessment of their neuroendocrine system. These tests provide a thorough assessment of adrenal health with catecholamine and cortisol levels, as well as identify sex hormone imbalances which can give insight into many chronic diseases. Given the connection between mental and medical illness, it is more important than ever to monitor and address imbalance in these areas.

## Resources

1. [http://www.cdc.gov/PCD/issues/2010/jan/09\\_0126.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/PCD/issues/2010/jan/09_0126.htm) Accessed May 3, 2013.
2. <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/the-numbers-count-mental-disorders-in-america/index.shtml>, Accessed May 3, 2013.
3. <http://www.suicide.org/suicide-statistics.html> Accessed May 3, 2013.
4. <http://www.webmd.com/mental-health/mental-health-types-illness> Accessed May 3, 2013.

## IMPORTANT BLUECROSS BLUESHIELD UPDATES

Due to changes in Blue Cross Blue Shield's policies, Labrix will no longer submit claims to any BCBS plan. This change is effective immediately. We will provide detailed invoices to the patient upon request. If you have any questions regarding this update please contact the Billing Department at 877.656.9596.

# Upcoming events

West Coast Core Training  
July 27, 2013  
[Register Here](#)