

HOW TO: FINDING MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT

If the situation is potentially life-threatening, get immediate emergency assistance by calling 911, available 24 hours a day.

If you or someone you know is suicidal or in emotional distress, contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org or **1-800-273-TALK(8255)**. Trained crisis workers are available to talk **24 hours a day, 7 days a week**. Your confidential and toll-free call goes to the nearest crisis center in the Lifeline national network. These centers provide crisis counseling and mental health referrals.

HEALTH INSURANCE

1. If you have health insurance, start by calling your insurers information number (generally found on the back of your insurance card). Ask them for phone numbers of mental health professionals in your area who accept your insurance plan. In order to have several possibilities, try to get at least three (3) names and numbers of mental health professionals in your area.
2. If you **do not have insurance**, you can apply for Covered California at www.coverca.com or www.HealthCare.gov

REFERRALS

3. Talk to your primary care doctor or another professional about mental health problems. Many professionals you know may be able to give you referral ideas for good mental health providers-- your accountant, lawyer, dentist, clergy member, physician – any professional you have a relationship with who honors your confidentiality is a good resource. These people all provide services in the community and refer to each other frequently.
4. Ask friends or family members* if they can recommend someone; just be sure they will be supportive and not intrusive.
*When asking for a referral to a therapist, remember that you do not have to go into details of why you're looking for someone unless you want to. It's enough just to say, "I'm having some problems that I'd like to consult with a therapist about. Do you recommend anyone?"

OTHER POSSIBLE SOURCES

5. SAMHSA Treatment Referral Helpline: 1-877-SAMHSA7 (1-877-726-4727) provides general information on mental health and locate treatment services in your area. Speak to a live person, Monday - Friday from 8am to 8pm EST.
6. Self-help groups and support groups can be great resources. Self-help groups are generally focused on a specific issues such as alcohol abuse, drug use, or overeating. Support groups can be more general and can often be found online. One resource is NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) www.nami.org or 1-800-950-NAMI (6264).
7. Psychology Today, www.psychologytoday.com probably has one of the more comprehensive listings in the US. They contract with other trustworthy sites like WebMD to provide their list to their readers. A therapist cannot be listed with Psychology Today unless they can prove they have a legitimate advanced degree in their discipline and an up to date professional license or certification.