



## Where to Find the Appropriate Mental Health Care

### How to Access the Right Care

Finding the right mental health care for you and your family can be a daunting task. Where you go for help to find the right mental health care depends on the age of the person experiencing mental health signs and symptoms and the nature of the condition and/or symptoms. The best place to start is often your primary care physician. Below are other suggested resources.

- Your local health department's Mental Health Division or local Mental Health Association
- Other local or national mental health organizations, such as the National Alliance on Mental Illness
- Clergyperson
- Marriage and family counselors
- Family services agencies, such as Catholic Charities, Family Services or Jewish Social Services
- Educational consultants or school counselors
- Child guidance counselors
- Psychiatric hospitals accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Health Care Organizations
- Your health insurance company
- Professional associations that have directories of mental health providers, such as the American Medical Association, the American Psychiatric Association, the American Psychological Association or the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies
- Your trusted friends or family members
- Your company's employee assistance program
- Hotlines, crisis centers and emergency rooms
- Psychologists and psychiatrists
- Social service/community services organizations

### Levels of Care

Before receiving treatment for mental health care, it's important to understand what the most appropriate level of care is based on the severity of each case to ensure successful help/treatment. For example, telehealth (the use of digital information and communication technologies, such as computers and mobile devices, to access health care services remotely and manage your health care) and text-based services (online therapy that lets you connect with a licensed therapist from the privacy of your device via text message – at a significantly lower cost than traditional, in-person therapy) may not be appropriate for a case that would require an inpatient type of care. However, they may be appropriate when in-person/face-to-face, scheduled visits aren't required or possible for ongoing treatment.

Here are the appropriate levels of mental health care from lowest to highest:

#### Outpatient Care

- 12-Step Programs (community-based and free)
- Routine Outpatient Care (ROC)
- Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP)
- Partial Hospitalization

#### Inpatient Care

- Inpatient Acute Care
- Inpatient Residential

#### When to Consider a Higher Level of Care

A higher level of care should be considered in the following situations: when a current lower level of care (such as outpatient treatment) isn't able to address the needs of the person receiving treatment and if a person's level of functioning continues to decrease, even though they have been actively participating in a lower level of care.

"Mental Illness And The Family: Finding The Right Mental Health Care For You," Mental Health America, mhanational.org, accessed Dec. 16, 2020.

"Mental health providers: Tips on finding one," Mayo Clinic Staff, mayoclinic.org, May 16, 2017.

"Levels of Mental Health Care Descriptions (Lowest to Highest)," Cigna, accessed Jan. 5, 2021.



## Mediterranean White Bean Soup

This Mediterranean White Bean Soup is a flavorful and satisfying vegetarian meal that can be served for lunch or dinner.

**Hands-on Time:** 10 minutes

**Total Time:** 35 minutes

**Servings:** 6 servings

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 teaspoons minced garlic
- 2 large carrots, chopped
- 2 celery ribs, chopped
- 6 cups vegetable broth
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- 3 (15-ounce) cans, white beans, drained and rinsed
- 2 cups fresh spinach
- Fresh parsley
- Grated Parmesan cheese

1. In a stock pot, heat the olive oil over medium-high heat. Add the onions and cook until they are translucent. Add the garlic, carrots, celery, thyme, oregano, salt and pepper, and cook for an additional two to three minutes.
2. Add the vegetable broth and beans; bring to a boil; reduce heat and simmer for 15 minutes.
3. Stir in the spinach and continue to simmer until the spinach wilts.
4. Serve with parsley and Parmesan cheese, if desired.

Recipe Adapted From: [feelgoodfoodie.net/recipe/white-bean-soup](http://feelgoodfoodie.net/recipe/white-bean-soup)

# The Mental-Health Bargain of Your Homegrown Garden

Preparing for the first sprout of spring may help shield us from those pesky winter blues that might be heightened during the current pandemic. Much like the perks of travel planning for our mental wellbeing (mentioned in our December newsletter), garden planning can encourage a futuristic mindset that can help release some of the layered stress we are all undoubtedly experiencing.

In addition to the enjoyment we might get from planning for our springtime spread gardening itself provides a bounty of benefits for both our mental and physical wellbeing:

- It might stave off symptoms of depression and anxiety and can improve stress management.
- It also helps us cultivate a growth mindset.
- Being in nature helps us live seasonally (which has a laundry list of its own benefits).
- Not to mention, the healthy eating bonus – growing your own produce organically without the sometimes-costly price tag!

Even if you planted a luscious garden last year, you can still dream up changes for this year's layout – regular plant rotation is valuable for optimizing soil nutrients seasons over. You might even check out free online garden planners, too (like [almanac.com](http://almanac.com)).

### Get to know the needs of a new plant or veggie you want to grow this year:

Each plant has a host of requirements for thriving in your garden. Use this time indoors to investigate and brush up on those details, which can make all the difference in the success of your garden. Check out free resources (like online gardening encyclopedias) or peruse gardening literature (personal favorite shoutout: “Rodale’s Basic Organic Gardening”).



### How to Prep for Your Garden Now

**Start plants indoors:** Plants like tomatoes and peppers of all varieties do best with a long growing season, so it's recommended to get a jump on cultivating them indoors if you aren't located in a warm climate year-round. Bonus: Seeds are often discounted through the month of February! Stock up now and save as much as 50%!

### Design or redesign your garden(s):

A lot of the fun in garden prep comes from visualizing the layout until you can sink your hands in the soil and smell the sweet scent of fresh blossoms.

### Go easy on yourself when things go

**awry:** There will be insects, mystery plant diseases and gardening flops to learn from each season. These are learning opportunities and not failures. Even if you've been gardening for decades, remind yourself that the art of gardening itself provides a landscape flourishing with opportunity for personal growth.

“10 Mental-Health Benefits of Gardening,” Seth J. Gillihan, [psychologytoday.com](http://psychologytoday.com), June 19, 2019.

“10 Helpful Gardening Tips That Actually Helped This Former Plant Killer,” Colleen Stinchcombe, [self.com](http://self.com), June 16, 2020.