

September 2020 Health Awareness

National Recovery Month (Recovery Month) is a national observance held every September to educate Americans that substance use treatment and mental health services can enable those with a mental and/or substance use disorder to live a healthy and rewarding life.



Recovery Month celebrates the gains made by those in recovery, just as we celebrate health improvements made by those who are managing other health conditions such as hypertension, diabetes, asthma, and heart disease. The observance reinforces the positive message that behavioral health is essential to overall health, prevention works, treatment is effective, and people can and do recover.

There are millions of Americans whose lives have been transformed through recovery. Since these successes often go unnoticed by the broader population, Recovery Month provides a vehicle for everyone to celebrate these accomplishments. Each September, tens of thousands of prevention, treatment, and recovery programs and facilities around the country celebrate Recovery Month. They speak about the gains made by those in recovery and share their success stories with their neighbors, friends, and colleagues. In doing so, everyone helps to increase awareness and furthers a greater understanding about the diseases of mental and substance use disorders. For more information please go to <https://www.naadac.org/national-recovery-month>



Gynecologic Cancer Awareness Month - is recognized each year in September and is a perfect time to encourage women to learn more about cancers of the cervix, vagina, vulva, ovaries, and uterus including early detection and prevention. Every year in the United States, about 89,000 women are diagnosed with and more than 29,000 die from a gynecologic cancer. More than 13,000 women are diagnosed with cervical cancer in the United States. **Yet cervical cancer is one of the most preventable cancers today.** In most cases cervical cancer can be prevented through early detection and treatment of abnormal cell changes that occur in the cervix years before cervical cancer develops. We now know that these cell changes are caused by **human papillomavirus**, commonly known as **HPV**. The traditional test for early detection has been the **Pap test**. For women age 30 and over, an **HPV test** is also recommended. HPV tests can find any of the high-risk types of HPV that are commonly found in cervical cancer. For guidelines on testing and type of cancer please go to <https://www.nccc-online.org/hpvcervical-cancer/cervical-cancer-screening/>

National Suicide Prevention Awareness - Suicidal thoughts, much like mental health conditions, can affect anyone regardless of age, gender, or background. In fact, suicide is often the result of an untreated mental health condition. Suicidal thoughts, although common, should not be considered normal and often indicate more serious issues. Every year thousands of individuals die by suicide, leaving behind their friends and family members to navigate the tragedy of loss. In many cases, friends and families affected by a suicide loss (often called "suicide loss survivors") are left in the dark. Too often the feelings of shame and stigma prevent them from talking openly.



September is National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month—a time to share resources and [stories](#) in an effort to shed light on this highly taboo and stigmatized topic. We use this month to reach out to those affected by suicide, raise awareness, and connect individuals with suicidal ideation to treatment services. It is also important to ensure that individuals, friends, and families have access to the resources they need to discuss suicide prevention. Learn the warning signs and risk factors of suicide at <https://www.nami.org/get-involved/awareness-events/suicide-prevention-awareness-month>