

Severe Mental Illness Tied To Higher Rates of Substance Use



New NIH study shows that certain protective factors do not exist in those with severe mental illness.

People with severe mental illness such as schizophrenia or bipolar disorder have a higher risk for substance use, especially cigarette smoking, and protective factors usually associated with lower rates of substance use do not exist in severe mental illness, according to a new study funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), part of the National Institutes of Health.

Estimates based on past studies suggest that people diagnosed with mood or anxiety disorders are about twice as likely as the general population to also suffer from a substance use disorder.

Statistics from the 2012 National Survey on Drug Use and Health indicate close to 8.4 million adults in the United States have both a mental and substance use disorder.

However, only 7.9 percent of people receive treatment for both conditions, and 53.7 percent receive no treatment at all, the statistics indicate.

Studies exploring the link between substance use disorders and other mental illnesses have typically not included people with severe psychotic illnesses.

Source: National Institutes of Health (NIH). [Click here](#) for more details.