

Recovery Complications Checklist

Mental health recovery is an ongoing process—there’s no quick fix or finish line. You’ll likely face challenges in recovering from your mental health condition(s), but there are actions you can take when hurdles arise.

The following checklist includes a variety of complications that you might encounter during your recovery journey. Use it as a self-assessment to check in with yourself or to guide a conversation with your providers or care partners. Keep in mind that change is inevitable during recovery - if you’ve experienced some of the following but it isn’t negatively impacting your life, it may not be something you need to address.

Physical challenges

Sexual

- Increased sex drive
- Decreased sex drive
- Erectile dysfunction
- Vaginal dryness
- Pain / discomfort during sex
- Difficulty with ejaculation / orgasm

Weight

- Significant or rapid weight gain
- Significant or rapid weight loss
- Difficulty maintaining a steady weight

Digestive and gut health

- Increased appetite
- Decreased appetite

- Nausea
- Stomach pain
- Constipation
- Diarrhea

Sleep

- Sleeping more than usual
- Sleeping less than usual
- Trouble falling asleep
- Trouble staying asleep / waking up multiple times each night
- Trouble waking up
- Extreme tiredness during the day
- Vivid dreams (hard to tell from reality)

Movement

- Restless leg syndrome (uncomfortable sensations in and overpowering urge to move legs)?
- Tardive dyskinesia?
- Involuntary body movements (e.g., rocking / jerking, arching backward, head nodding, irregular breathing)
- Involuntary extremity movements (piano / guitar-playing fingers, wriggling, tapping, sustained posture)
- Akathisia (the need to move, get up, and march in place)
- Involuntary facial movements (e.g., rapid blinking, chewing motions, grimacing, smacking lips, making sucking motions with mouth, sticking out tongue, probing tongue around mouth)

Emotional and support challenges

Motivation

- Feeling hopeless or discouraged about recovery as a possibility
- Feeling unmotivated to put in effort needed to heal / recover

Grief and loss

- Missing parts of your pre-recovery self
- Missing your old lifestyle and habits
- Missing friends who aren't healthy for you to be around
- Feeling unable to participate in pre-recovery activities or social groups

Loneliness and social support

- Feeling alone in your experiences
- Lack of support from family / home
- Lack of support from friends
- Lack of support from partner
- Lack of support from school / workplace
- Lack of support from other community important to you
- Strained relationship with caregiver or others close to you

Lifestyle challenges

- Trouble with dietary restrictions
- Struggling at work, in need of workplace accommodations
- Struggling to reduce or quit alcohol / substance use as coping method
- Struggling to fill time without use of previous (harmful) coping methods

Treatment challenges

- Don't trust or feel heard by provider
- Unable to find provider of shared identity (e.g., race, gender, sexuality, religion, etc.)
- Unable to find provider who understands cultural components of your lifestyle, mental health, and recovery
- Discouraged by trial and error with medication
- Lack of telehealth access and / or computer skills
- Difficulty getting to appointments
- Difficulty finding time for appointments
- Treatment cost

Insurance complications

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