

What strategies can you use to ease anxiety?

Take some time out to relax with a book, listen to music or talk with a friend.

Use mindfulness: be aware of what's around you, focus on your breathing.

Take a walk or try some mild exercise.

Question the anxious thought. Is it realistic? Is it true? How will worrying resolve the issue?

“If you miss a step on the stairs
and your stomach lurches –
it feels like that but lasts much,
much longer.”

Anonymous



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Anxiety



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Anxiety

Anxiety as a result of day-to-day stress is a normal reaction. However, anxiety that makes you feel distressed, worried and impacts your life for a long period of time is not.

Mental illness impacts the quality of life of around 1 in 5 Australians every year – approximately 20% of our population. Although the effect of mental illness can be profound, it's important to remember; it is treatable.

What is Anxiety?

- Anxiety disorders are medical conditions that are distinguished by chronic and often inordinate worrying.
- The result of such persistent worrying can be extremely severe and distressing having a negative impact on a person's ability to perform basic day-to-day tasks.
- There are many different types of anxiety disorders and often people experience more than one at a time.
- Although there are different types of anxiety disorders all are characterised by severe feelings of worry and stress.
- Anxiety disorders are more prominent in women than men and are common among people who are experiencing other mental health disorders.
- Life events and normal life stress, personality traits, environment and an inherited predisposition are factors that can result in anxiety.
- Anxiety is treatable and with appropriate intervention outcomes are usually positive.

Common Types of Anxiety Disorders

- Generalised anxiety disorder
- Obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD)
- Social anxiety disorder
- Panic disorder

Each anxiety disorder can result in different symptoms such as a fear of being in public, a fear of being humiliated, fear of death, feelings of being trapped, chronic worry over trivial things, intense phobias or reactions to trauma that happened long ago but are still impacting present day-to-day functioning.

Some people with anxiety experience multiple symptoms of anxiety disorders, and may also experience depression. It is important to seek support as soon as possible if you think you're experiencing anxiety. Your symptoms may not subside on their own and without professional help, they can start to take over your life.

Treatment & Support

- Your CLS counsellor is a good place to start. Your counsellor can help you identify the thoughts that may be contributing to your anxious feelings and work through the issues with you.
- Your General Practitioner (GP) is someone to see if you have concerns about your mental health and wellbeing. Your GP can start by prescribing a Mental Health Plan which may include referral to a mental health professional, prescription of medicine or other support as needed.
- When your GP makes a referral to a mental health professional, the cost is sometimes subsidised by Medicare.
- With the guidance of your GP medication may be prescribed as a form of treatment, self-care and therapy from a mental health professional may also assist in reducing symptoms.
- Early intervention and efficient treatment usually results in positive outcomes such as significantly reduced and in some cases, eliminated symptoms of anxiety.