

Dealing with anxiety - Factsheet



Everyone has feelings of anxiety, nervousness, tension, and stress from time to time. Here are some ways to help manage them which are easy for anyone to give a go.

Become a relaxation expert. One traditional way to really chill yourself out, reduce anxiety levels and refresh your mind is meditation. When you think about meditation, you might imagine someone sitting in a funny position, wearing a special outfit, humming to themselves or chanting. But while the practice of meditation is rooted in the ancient history of the Buddhist religion, all it really means is learning to tune into your body and surroundings in order to relax your mind. There are many different types of meditation, the most popular being mindfulness meditation. This involves sitting quietly and comfortably, paying close attention to your thoughts, feelings, emotions and bodily sensations. You might choose to focus on sounds you can hear in the distance, the sensation of your clothes against your skin, or to consider how each part of your body is feeling. The aim of all this is to make a connection with the present moment, cutting racing thoughts and worries about the past or future. Once you're able to do this, meditation can be a great way to help yourself feel better in times of stress.

Get enough sleep and the right nourishment: It's impossible to underestimate the importance of getting a good night's sleep - this is your body's way of recharging and if you don't sleep enough (or also if you sleep too much) it can lead to physical or mental health issues. A lack of sleep can make your body produce more dopamine and less serotonin and as a combination of factors, this can make you feel a bit jittery and exasperate anxiety. Healthy eating is always talked about for so many mental and physical health conditions - but there are good reasons for this. If you eat fruit, vegetables, lean proteins, and whole grains it will help your long-term energy (instead of the short bursts that come from too much sugar or caffeine - which can make you more anxious).

Connect with others and the world around you. Spend time with friends or family or head out for a walk. Spending time with real people - in real life (not chatting on your phone) will help your mind feel more grounded and calmer. This is the natural way we evolved to relax and be social - not staring at a screen - so your mind is at its most comfortable like this. Get some sunlight - go for a walk, boost your natural serotonin levels and vitamin D by getting some sun on your skin and in your line of vision (wearing sunscreen, of course!).

Note: When anxiety or worry feels extreme, it may be a sign of an [anxiety disorder](#). For someone who has an anxiety disorder, getting proper care from a health professional is important. These tips can help too, of course. But professional treatment is the only way to shake an anxiety disorder.