

Anxiety - tips and self-help

Anxiety is a feeling of worry or fear that everyone experiences at times.

You can feel anxious or worried when you are concerned about something you are experiencing or that is about to happen. For example, a test, speaking in public, a job interview or a social occasion.

Feelings of anxiety are your body's natural reaction to some stressful or dangerous situations. They focus your attention and can help you react. A healthy amount of anxiety is OK and can keep you safe.

But anxiety can sometimes build up over time and be difficult to manage.

Our [tips to help with anxiety](#) can help you manage and reduce feelings of anxiety.

Signs of anxiety

Anxiety affects different people in different ways.

Anxiety can affect how you think, feel and behave, including:

- being on edge, restless or irritable
- feeling a sense of dread
- difficulty concentrating or making decisions
- repeatedly checking things or seeking assurance from others
- avoiding situations or putting off doing things you are worried about
- an increase or decrease in your appetite or craving junk food
- loss of interest in sex

Physical signs of anxiety can include:

- dizziness
- sweating
- shortness of breath
- trembling
- headaches
- tummy aches or diarrhoea
- tiredness
- [sleep problems](#)

- nightmares
- teeth-grinding or jaw clenching
- a strong, fast or irregular heartbeat
- pins and needles
- a dry mouth
- muscle tension or neck and shoulder pain
- a flare-up of another health problem, for example, dermatitis or asthma

Signs of anxiety can be mistaken for a physical illness. Talk to your GP if you are concerned about any of these signs.

If your anxiety has been going on for a while or getting worse, you may need to [talk to someone else](#).

Causes of anxiety

What causes one person's anxiety may not create the same response in someone else. Anxiety can be brought on by different situations or experiences.

Anxiety can be an understandable response to a stressful event in your life, for example:

- a family or relationship problem
- [a bereavement](#)
- an illness
- a work situation
- [money worries](#)
- [exam stress](#)

Sometimes it can be difficult to know what is making you anxious. This can be upsetting or stressful. If you learn to recognise what is making you anxious, it can help you deal with the uncertainty.

Anxiety can also be part of [stress](#).

Tips to help with anxiety

There are many things you can try to help you learn how to manage feelings of anxiety.

[Make](#)

• [notes](#)

[+ Make a plan](#)

[+ Manage your screen time](#)

+ [Make time](#)

+ [Challenge unhelpful thoughts](#)

+ [Talk about your feelings](#)

+ [Breathing exercises](#)

+ [Mindfulness](#)

+ [Sleep well](#)

+ [Healthy eating](#)

+ [Physical activity](#)

+ [Alcohol and anxiety](#)

Self-help resources for anxiety

Clear Fear app

A free app that helps you manage the symptoms of anxiety.

Get [Clear Fear from the App Store](#)

Get [Clear Fear from Google Play](#)

Mindshift CBT app

A free app that helps you reduce worry, stress and panic. It is based on [cognitive behavioural therapy \(CBT\)](#).

Get [Mindshift from the App Store](#)

Get [Mindshift from Google Play](#)

Headspace app

An app that teaches meditation and mindfulness skills.

Get [Headspace from the App Store](#)

Get [Headspace from Google Play](#)

Minding your Wellbeing Programme videos

Five videos that help you learn more about mindfulness, gratitude, self-care and resilience.

Watch the [Minding Your Wellbeing Programme](#) videos

Stress Control course

For many people, stress can include or be linked to feelings of anxiety or [low mood](#).

Our 'Stress Control' course can help you learn stress management skills.

[StressControl.ie](#)

When to talk to someone else

If you have tried our tips and the self help resources but you think you need extra support, it may help to talk to someone.

[Organisations that provide mental health services](#)

Text About It

Text About It is a free, 24/7 service, providing everything from a calming chat to immediate support for your mental health and emotional wellbeing.

Free-text HELLO to 50808 for an anonymous chat with a trained volunteer, any time.

[textaboutit.ie](#)

Samaritans

Samaritans services are available anytime, for confidential and non-judgemental support.

Freephone Samaritans on [116 123](#)
[jo@samaritans.ie](#)
[samaritans.ie](#)

Worried about someone else

If you notice someone is struggling with their mental health, this can be worrying. You may not know what to do.

[How to help someone experiencing mental health issues](#)

Talk to a GP or mental health professional if:

- you are finding it hard to cope
- anxiety is having a negative affect on your day-to-day life
- your anxiety has been going on for a while or getting worse

Ask for an urgent appointment if you are in crisis.

[Generalised anxiety disorder](#)

[Social anxiety \(social phobia\)](#)

 [Find a GP](#)

 [Find a GP out of hours](#)

If you feel you are going to harm yourself or someone else, get help as soon as possible from:

- [the nearest emergency department \(ED\)](#)
- emergency services on 112 or 999

If you go to an ED, it can help to bring someone with you.

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