

Anxiety.

Let's talk about it.



What is anxiety?

Feeling stressed or worried is normal. But if you feel stressed or worried for no reason; if you feel the same when the 'obvious' cause has gone; or if your sense of stress and worry has lasted a lot longer than usual, you might have anxiety. If this sounds like you, don't worry. Anxiety is very common. One quarter of Australians will experience an anxiety condition in their lifetime.

Types of anxiety.

- **Generalised anxiety disorder (GAD):** feeling anxious most days and worrying about different things for six months or more
- **Social anxiety:** scared of being criticised, embarrassed or humiliated when you're with people or out in public
- **Specific phobias:** avoiding something or situations because you're scared. For example, scared of getting an injection, scared of large crowds, scared of spiders and the like
- **Panic disorder:** panic attacks and struggling to control your anxiety. You might also have shortness of breath and chest pain. Having panic attacks for more than a month? You could have a panic disorder
- **Obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD):** invasive thoughts that cause anxiety, often followed by trying to 'fix' the anxiety with particular behaviours or rituals

Causes of anxiety.

- **Family history** – a parent suffers from anxiety
- **Illness** – diabetes or thyroid disease can cause anxiety
- **Life events** – starting a new job or a family member dying
- **Other mental health conditions** – depression, PTSD
- **Stressful and traumatic events** – being in a car crash, workplace near miss or serious injury
- **Substance use** – using drugs or alcohol
- **Thinking style and personality** – being a natural worrier

Symptoms of anxiety.



Behaviour

- Difficulty making decisions
- Withdrawal from others
- Procrastination
- Avoidance



Thoughts

- "Everything's going wrong."
- "I might die."
- "I can't handle the way I feel."
- "I can't calm myself down."
- "I can't focus on anything but my worries."



Physical

- Headaches
- Fatigue
- Feeling sick
- Pounding heart
- Sleep problems
- Sweating
- Stomach concerns
- Twitches and trembles



Feelings

- Irritable
- Tense and on edge
- Nervous
- Scared
- Panicky
- Very worried or afraid

Common treatments.

Talking to a psychologist

There's lots of ways a psychologist can help you with your anxiety. These include:

- **Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT)** to try to change unhelpful thoughts and build your skills to control your anxiety
- **Acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT)** to help you accept the thoughts and feelings you're experiencing
- **e-Therapy:** following similar approaches like CBT above, e-Therapy take place online with your mobile phone, tablet or computer

Medications

In some cases, a medical practitioner may recommend medication in addition to psychological treatment. Remember, you should only be prescribed medication by a registered medical professional. Do not self-medicate. If you self-medicate, you run the risk of incorrect self-diagnosis, potential adverse reactions, worsening of the condition and more.

Where to from here?

We all visit our dentist when we have a toothache. The same goes for our physical health and why we schedule appointments with our GP, gynaecologist, physio, chiro, dermatologist, naturopath... the list is endless.

So why treat our mental health and wellbeing any differently?

If you've been stressed or worried for a long time, or longer than normal, then let's talk about it.

Access Psych is here to support you.

Call us on **1800 644 327**

Email info@accesspsych.com.au

Website accesspsych.com.au

Resources.



Black Dog Institute

Black Dog Institute is a medical institute in Australia investigating mental health across the lifespan. Their website features the latest research, resources and support services for a range of mental health conditions. For more, visit blackdoginstitute.org.au



Beyond Blue

Beyond Blue provide advice and support for anxiety, depression and suicide prevention. They also operate a free helpline. Telephone and online chat services are available 24/7. Phone **1300 224 363** or visit beyondblue.org.au



Reachout

Reachout is a mental health service for young people and their parents. The service provides self-help information, peer-support programs and referral tools designed to support young people with mental health concerns. For more, visit au.reachout.com

For urgent support.

If there's an immediate risk of harm to yourself or others, please call 000. If you need someone to talk with now, call:

Lifeline: 13 11 14

Beyond Blue: 1300 22 4636 or chat online at beyondblue.org.au

Suicide Call Back Service:

1300 659 467



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