

These are just a few of many different techniques and strategies that you could use to help yourself. If you feel that these are not helping or that they are too hard to start, then talk to your mental health professional.

Talking therapies are usually recommended for anxiety, but decisions about your care are always made with your opinions in mind.

Still have questions?

www.youngminds.org.uk/anxiety

www.moodjuice.scot.nhs.uk/anxiety

Contact

The Emotional Health Service

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Opening hours:

Monday to Thursday: 8.45am to 5.00pm

Friday: 8.45am to 4.45 pm

W: www.afcinfo.org.uk/emotionalhealthservice

Emotional Health Service



Anxiety disorders

A leaflet for young people

What is anxiety?

Anxiety is a very normal feeling that everyone including, children and young people, experience in different ways. It changes the way we think and the way our bodies feel. The reason it exists is in fact to help humans in dangerous situations. For example, if you saw a bear in the woods, anxiety would prepare your body to run away and tell your mind that you need to run.

However, sometimes anxiety appears when we don't actually need it. For example, if you have anxiety about going to school, this is not particularly helpful to you. When anxiety becomes unhelpful and stops young people from living their lives in the way they want to, then it needs to be sorted out. It is important for all of us to recognise when our anxieties are getting out of control and are stopping us from enjoying ourselves. When your anxieties get out of your control, you should ask for help to deal with them.

What are the signs?

Anxiety disorders can have different effects on different people. They can affect your body as well as your mind. Here are some ways that you could be affected:

- **your body:** dizzy, shakey, sweaty, knees wobbling, difficulty concentrating, heart racing, chest tight
- **your mind:** worrying about something bad happening, imagining worst-case scenarios, always looking out for danger
- **your behaviour:** avoiding doing things you used to like, finding it hard to relax, snapping at people close to you, getting flustered
- **your feelings:** on edge, nervous, stressed, uptight

Why do I have anxiety?

There are several different things that can make some people more likely than others to develop anxiety.

- Anxiety can run in families, so it could be that you were at a higher risk to develop anxiety than would have been expected
- Young people who have experienced scary events are more likely to develop anxiety
- Stressful situations can also lead to young people dealing with anxiety

Different types of anxiety

Here are a few different types of anxiety, they are grouped according to what the fear or worry is about.

- **Fears:** some young people have specific fears about different things which are too difficult to manage on their own
- **Generalised anxiety:** worries or fears about nothing specific, which can prevent young people from enjoying their lives
- **Separation anxiety:** worries about being away from a parent or caregiver
- **Social anxiety:** finding it extremely difficult to be in social situations, which can affect school attendance, making friends and seeing relatives

What will help me?

First of all, it is helpful to talk about your anxieties with someone that can help you. This could be a parent, school teacher or mental health professional. There are lots of ways that you can help yourself. For example you could:

- make sure you are looking after yourself. Are you sleeping well? Eating well? Do you have a reliable daily routine?
- look for a solution and plan (in small steps) how you could carry it out
- write down thoughts that make you worry or scared and think about whether they are likely to be true, if thinking them helps you in any way, when they will stop being worrying