

# Recognise the signs of anxiety



Anxiety is a normal human emotion. Many people feel anxious, or nervous, from time to time, but if you suffer from an anxiety disorder you might experience intense, excessive, and persistent worry and fear.

## Signs and symptoms of anxiety

The US-based Mayo Clinic lists the following common signs and symptoms of anxiety:

- Feeling nervous or having a sense of impending danger, panic or doom.
- Having an increased heart rate.
- Breathing rapidly (hyperventilation).
- Sweating.
- Trouble concentrating or thinking.

## How to manage your anxiety

There are several kinds of anxiety disorders. Included amongst these is generalised anxiety disorder (persistent worry that is usually out of proportion to the actual circumstance) and panic attacks (waves of anxiety so intense that they reach a climax in a few minutes).

If you're suffering from bouts of anxiety, it may be helpful to identify the events surrounding the experiences you're having:

- What provokes the anxiety?
- What thoughts or physical sensations accompany the anxiety?
- How am I coping with the anxiety?

Exploring your answers may help you to understand the nature of your anxiety as well as determine possible strategies for reducing it.

There are also specific changes you can make that may help alleviate anxiety symptoms:

- Exercise regularly and get enough sleep.
- Eat a nutritious, well-balanced diet.
- Seek emotional support from friends and family.
- Focus on positive aspects of your life.
- Establish realistic, attainable goals.
- Identify activities that feel overwhelming and find ways to make them more manageable.

## When to seek medical help

Consult your doctor if:

- Your anxiety is interfering with everyday life, work, and personal relationships.
- You feel depressed and have other mental health concerns.
- You have trouble with alcohol and/or drugs.
- You have suicidal thoughts or tendencies.

Anxiety is a very treatable condition. See your doctor and get professional advice.