

# Anxiety

## *A Step In The Right Direction*

Anxiety is more than just feeling stressed or worried, it is one of the most common mental health conditions in Australia. While it is normal for people to experience feeling anxious in particular situations, this feeling usually passes once the 'stressor' is removed. Anxiety is when these anxious feelings are ongoing and exist without any particular reason or cause.

Given that we all experience some anxiety the symptoms can often develop gradually over time. Family history, personality, stressful life events, health issues and substance use can all contribute as causal factors.



### There are different types of anxiety some general symptoms include:

#### Emotional

- Feeling very worried on most days for more than 6 months
- Avoiding situations which cause anxiety, such as social events
- Constantly feeling overwhelmed or frightened
- Sudden feelings of intense panic
- Experiencing recurring thoughts that cause anxiety, but that you may think seem silly to others
- Experiencing ongoing difficulties, such as flash backs, after a traumatic life event

#### Physical

- Intense experience of sweat, shaky, elevated heart rate, shortness of breath, nausea, stomach pain, dizziness, hot/cold flushes over a short period of time
- Feeling irritable or on edge
- Difficulty concentrating
- Restless or broken sleep
- Finding it difficult to settle or calm down

### Where Can You Go For Help?

**Employee Assistance Program:** is a confidential, short term assistance program provided by qualified professionals. This service is available to all employees, for both work-related and personal problems where you may need assistance, support or guidance.

**General Practitioner:** Your GP can discuss medical or other support options with you. If you don't already have a local GP you can search for clinics in your area via: Health Engine, <https://healthengine.com.au>

**Skilled Health Professional:** Talk to your trusted health professional about your experience with anxiety, or you can find additional information on seeking help via:

**BlackDog Institute:** <http://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/public/gettinghelp/overview.cfm>

**BeyondBlue:** 1300 22 4636 (24hrs, 7 days) OR <http://www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support/find-a-professional>

**TIP:** Ask the receptionist to schedule a double appointment time with your health professional so that there is plenty of time to discuss the situation without feeling rushed.

**Inner Circle:** Alternatively, you can also speak with your manager, a supportive family member, close friend or colleague for support.

**Conversation Starters:** If you are having trouble finding the words to open a conversation about your feelings try some of these conversation openers.

*"I've been pretending things are going okay, but I'm actually feeling ...."*

*"I'm not coping, and I need help figuring out what to do about it...."*

*"I need to tell you why I have stopped going out...."*

*"I am worried a lot of the time even though I know it is sometimes not rational..."*

*"I lie awake at night worrying..."*

Australian Psychological Society, 2015: [https://www.psychology.org.au/publications/tip\\_sheets/anxiety/#s1](https://www.psychology.org.au/publications/tip_sheets/anxiety/#s1)

Beyond Blue, 2015. <http://www.beyondblue.org.au/>

Raveley, N., Alen, N., Jorm, A., Morgan, A., Ryan, S., & Purcell, R. (2014). A guide to what works for anxiety. Retrieved from, <http://resources.beyondblue.org.au/prism/file?token=BL/0762, 1-137>.

BlackDog Institute, 2015. <http://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/index.cfm>

Mind Health Connect, 2015: <http://www.mindhealthconnect.org.au/anxiety>

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