

Feeling anxious?



Anxiety is something everyone experiences at times, and feeling anxious is a perfectly natural reaction to some situations.

But sometimes feelings of anxiety can be constant, overwhelming or out of proportion to the situation and this can affect your daily life.

The good news is there are plenty of things you can try to help cope with anxiety. We also have specific tips and expert advice to help you look after your mental health and wellbeing if you are feeling worried or anxious about coronavirus (COVID-19).

What is anxiety?

Anxiety is a feeling of unease, like a worry or fear, that can be mild or severe. Everyone feels anxious from time to time and it usually passes once the situation is over.

It can make our heart race, we might feel sweaty, shaky or short of breath. Anxiety can also cause changes in our behaviour, such as becoming overly careful or avoiding things that trigger anxiety.

When anxiety becomes a problem, our worries can be out of proportion with relatively harmless situations. It can feel more intense or overwhelming, and interfere with our everyday lives and relationships.

The tips on this page should help you manage feelings of anxiety. But if your anxiety is affecting your daily life or causing you distress, you could consider seeking further support.

Top tips to cope with anxiety

Understand your anxiety

Try keeping a diary of what you are doing and how you feel at different times to help identify what's affecting you and what you need to take action on.

Challenge your anxious thoughts

Tackling unhelpful thoughts is one of the best things we can do to feel less anxious. Watch the video to find out more. [Reframing unhelpful thoughts video](#)

Make time for worries

If your worry feels overwhelming and takes over your day, setting specific "worry time" to go through your concerns each day can help you to focus on other things. Watch the video for more advice. [Tackle your worries video](#)

Shift your focus

Some people find relaxation, mindfulness or breathing exercises helpful. They reduce tension and focus our awareness on the present moment. [Try NHS-recommended relaxation exercises](#)

Face the things you want to avoid

It's easy to avoid situations, or rely on habits that make us feel safer, but these can keep anxiety going. By slowly building up time in worrying situations, anxious feelings will gradually reduce and you will see these situations are OK.

Get to grips with the problem

When you're feeling stressed or anxious, it can help to use a problem-solving technique to identify some solutions. This can make the challenges you're facing feel more manageable.