

# ANXIETY



**PAPYRUS**  
PREVENTION OF YOUNG SUICIDE



## What is anxiety?

We can feel anxious when we are worried, or afraid. Anxious thoughts and feelings are often linked to fears about something that is happening, or might happen in the future. It's normal to feel anxious sometimes, especially when we are going through stressful life events or changes.

However, anxiety can become a problem if we have anxious feelings that:

- **Last a long time**
- **Are out of proportion to the situation**
- **Feel so strong that we start to avoid situations and events**
- **Cause us to have panic attacks, or make us feel out of control**
- **Stop us from leading our normal life**

When we struggle with anxious feelings we can become overwhelmed with worry, panic or fear. Sometimes we can overanalyse situations or excessively worry about them.

---

## What are the symptoms of anxiety?

Like most animals, we have evolved to protect ourselves from dangerous situations. Sometimes, when we feel afraid or anxious, our mind tells our body that we are in danger, and our body reacts automatically. This is called the 'Fight, Flight or Freeze' response.

When our body responds in this way it releases hormones called adrenalin, and cortisol. These hormones help us to run away (flight), fight, or freeze. This can be useful if you are in a dangerous situation. They make our heart beat faster in order to pump blood to the parts of our body that need it the most. However, sometimes we experience this automatic response to anxiety when we don't need to run away, fight or freeze. In these situations, this release of hormones can cause some of the symptoms of anxiety, including panic attacks.

---

## What is a panic attack?

When we experience panic attacks, symptoms of anxiety can occur very quickly, sometimes without warning. These symptoms can include:

- **A fast, racing, or pounding heartbeat**
- **Feeling faint or dizzy**
- **Feeling very hot or very cold**
- **Shaking limbs**
- **Shortness of breath**
- **Feeling sick**
- **Having chest pain**
- **Feeling like you aren't connected to your mind, body, or the world around you**

Experiencing a panic attack can be very frightening. It can make us feel like we are going to die, faint or that we are losing control of our body or mind.

---

---

## What can I do to help myself when I feel anxious?

Here are some ideas of other things that you could try that might help.

- **Speak to someone you trust.** Talk about your worries with somebody who you know will listen and who may be able to help.
  - **Try to take control of your worries.** Give yourself a set time each day to think about your worries so that when they come into your mind you can reassure yourself that you will have time to think about them later. Writing them down when they come into your mind, and keeping them in one place, for looking at later, may be helpful.
  - **Take care of your physical health.** Getting enough sleep, eating well and staying hydrated can keep your energy levels up. This can help you to manage when you are feeling anxious. Getting regular exercise can also help.
  - **Breathing exercises.** Controlling your breathing can help you feel more in control when you are feeling anxious, or experiencing panic.
-

## Treatments for Anxiety

If your anxious feelings are becoming overwhelming or difficult to manage you should go and speak to your doctor for advice and support. Your doctor might suggest trying:

- **Talking Therapies** – Such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), or Counselling. These therapies can help you to understand what is causing your anxiety and give you techniques to manage your symptoms of anxiety.
- **Medication** – Medication can help to manage the symptoms of anxiety. Your doctor will work with you to find out which medication will suit you best.

Your doctor might also suggest a combination of medication and talking therapy.

---

## Anxiety and Suicide

When young people are struggling with feelings of anxiety, they can feel scared and alone. This can, at times, lead to thoughts of suicide.

Young Minds have found that one in six young people experience anxiety, so if you are experiencing anxiety remember you are not alone. If someone you know is experiencing anxiety, they are not alone. Reach out for help. With support, things can get better.

With the right support, young people can learn to manage anxious thoughts and behaviours, and recover from anxiety.

---

## Further Support

### Anxiety UK

Text Service **07537 416 905**

Infoline: **03444 775 774**

[www.anxietyuk.org.uk](http://www.anxietyuk.org.uk)



### No Panic

Youth Helpline **0330 606 1174**

Helpline **0844 967 4848**

[www.nopanic.org.uk](http://www.nopanic.org.uk)

### Good Thinking

[www.good-thinking.uk](http://www.good-thinking.uk)

## HOPELINEUK

Call: **0800 068 4141**

Text: **07860 039 967**

Email: **pat@papyrus-uk.org**

Opening hours:

9am – 10pm weekdays

2pm – 10pm weekends

2pm – 10pm bank holidays

**[www.papyrus-uk.org](http://www.papyrus-uk.org)**

Our Suicide Prevention Advisers  
are ready to support you



Registered with  
**FUNDRAISING  
REGULATOR**

Registered Charity Number - 1070896