



SANDHILLS PCN

## Anxiety

Information and self help leaflet



### What is anxiety?

Anxiety is a feeling of unease that can be mild moderate, or severe, it can include feelings of worry, fear or panic. Some find it hard to control these feelings and it can become more constant in their lives. A certain amount of anxiety is normal such as the nerves you get before a job interview or meeting but when it begins to affect your daily life it is time to seek more help.

There are four common anxiety disorders they are: generalised anxiety disorder, social anxiety, panic disorder and health anxiety.

#### Generalised anxiety:

A long term condition that causes anxiety about a wide range of situations rather than 1 specific event.

#### Panic disorder:

Regular sudden attacks of panic or fear, triggers can cause feelings of anxiety, stress and panic.

#### Health anxiety:

Excessive concern that you are ill or will become ill. Can be related to OCD.

#### Social anxiety:

Fear of crowds, talking to people and feeling overwhelmed in social situations.

### Symptoms

Symptoms of anxiety can differ individually but also depending on the type of anxiety, for further information and understanding of your symptoms please seek advice from your GP or a mental health professional.

#### Psychological:

- Excessive worry.
- Irritability and impatience
- Feeling "On edge"
- Fatigue.
- Vivid dreams
- Mind racing or Mind going blank
- Indecisiveness
- Difficulty concentrating
- Decreased memory

#### Behavioural:

- Obsessive or compulsive behaviour
- Phobic behaviour
- Avoidance of social situations
- Distress in social situations
- Stammering

## Physical:

- Heart racing
- Finding it hard to relax
- Muscle tension
- Sweating and trembling
- Shaking
- Panic attacks

## What can trigger anxiety?

It can accumulate over time due to stressful events from the past or some present situations. Some factors that can contribute to anxiety can include a change in personal situation, change in relationships or job, suffering a loss, day to day stress, side effects of medication or misuse of alcohol or drugs.

## Diagnosis

Anxiety can be diagnosed by your GP or a qualified mental health professional. Once formally diagnosed treatment options can be explored.

## Treatments

### Talking therapies:

CBT - Cognitive Behaviour Therapy is a short term talking therapy completed with a qualified mental health professional.

Counselling - a longer term solution which can address long standing anxiety and/ or trauma.

DBT - Dialectical Behaviour Therapy is a long term therapy like CBT and has a focus on mindfulness and dialectical thinking performed by a qualified mental health professional.

### Medication:

Severe cases of anxiety can be managed with medication if self-management and talking therapies aren't sufficient. Your GP will prescribe and monitor your medication to ensure it manages your condition well.

### Self-management:

There are a number of techniques that you can use to manage your anxiety including mindfulness, exercise, healthy eating, positive gratitude's and self talk, breathing exercises and NHS self help guides.

## Wellbeing activities to try

- ◇ Music
- ◇ Dancing/singing
- ◇ Mindful art
- ◇ Time with family and friends
- ◇ Movie nights
- ◇ Travel
- ◇ Self-care such as relaxing bath, massage
- ◇ Complementary therapies



## Resources

<https://www.mind.org.uk/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/conditions/generalised-anxiety-disorder/self-help/>

<https://www.anxietyuk.org.uk/>

Mindfulness apps such as Headspace and Calm.