

Types of Anxiety

Experiencing anxiety?

With the high demands and quick pace of today's lifestyle it can be quite common for anyone to experience severe anxiety.

A small amount of anxiety in your life can be quite healthy and can help you perform at more optimal levels (i.e., being anxious when driving a fast car can help you stay alert and spot any potential hazards). However, when anxiety becomes persistent or continual, it can interfere with daily life and sometimes it may even stop you from doing the things you enjoy.

Regularly experiencing anxiety and/or fear when no real threat is present can be a sign of an anxiety disorder.

Anxiety disorder is the most common mental illness in Australia and every year, around 14% of Australian adults are affected by a type of anxiety disorder.

- Black Dog Institute



Types of Anxiety

Generalised anxiety disorder:

Overly worrying about a variety of things all the time and rarely feeling relaxed and at ease. e.g. "Have I spent too much money on lunch today?" "Will Elizabeth hate me if I postpone our catch up by an hour?"

Specific phobias:

This is an intense fear of a particular object or situation, like spiders or travelling on a plane. Specific phobias can often make you avoid the situation or object you fear. e.g. being scared of planes will make you avoid any overseas holidays or travelling by air.

Social phobia:

Long-term and extreme fear of being poorly judged by others in social situations, or being embarrassed or criticised by other people. e.g. "I don't want to go to Timmy's party this weekend because no one will like me and they will all think I say silly things and wear funny clothes."

Panic disorder:

Feeling as though you will have or are having a panic attack and worrying that you may be experiencing another panic attack soon. e.g. if you are scared of small places you may experience a panic attack in an elevator or some other confined spaces. As a result of your fear of having a panic attack you may choose to sit next to an exit just in case you have one in the near future.

Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD):

Obsessions are unwanted thoughts and compulsions are unwanted actions. These are usually accompanied by fear of danger or worry that something bad will happen if these obsessive thoughts or compulsive actions are not followed through. e.g. "If I don't wash my hands for exactly 5 minutes I will develop a deadly skin disease." or "If I don't arrange my pens in the right order at work something bad will happen."

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD):

This usually develops in individuals who have suffered distressing experience. Sometimes this experience can be hard to forget so the thought of the threat may still be present. Symptoms can include regular flashbacks or recurring unwanted memories, trouble sleeping, and checking for danger.

There are professional services that can help with these situations.

- Counsellor or Psychologist
- General Practitioner
- Telephone crisis support services such as Lifeline - 13 11 14





Getting help

Different types of anxiety disorder require different attention and treatment.

Although medication can help with some anxieties, some people require face to face therapy sessions. If you are experiencing a form of severe anxiety, we encourage you to book an appointment with a counsellor. Accessing professional help will assist you overcome your symptoms and live your life free of any unwanted anxiety.

Self managing tips

Healthy Lifestyle

Get enough sleep, nourishment, and exercise. Research shows that looking after our bodies with sleep **(8-9 hours per night)**, balanced diet and exercise **(3-4 x 30mins a day)** will improve not only our physical health but also our mind.

Mindset

Relaxation and positive thinking will take time to implement but it is most important that you allow yourself time to learn how to relax your mind.

Meditation, a walk in the bush/beach, a bath or just being still is highly recommended.

How Work Happy can help

Work Happy has been around for over 17 years providing support within the mental health space touching the lives of over 100,000 people.

Work Happy offers training and support for workplaces on how to effectively deal with concerning situations with anxiety management.

We also provide additional training courses on topics such as;

- Accidental counselling
- Building resilience
- Managing mental health in the workplace
- Critical incident management
- Custom built topics

If you are already an EAP client of Work Happy and need support, call us on 1300 796 640 and we can arrange a time for you to talk with a dedicated practitioner.

Work Happy

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