Information NOW
Information for people in Newcastle upon Tyne

Anxiety and stress

Two in three people experience stress, anxiety or **depression** at some point in their life. It can be mild and last only a few weeks or it can be a lot more severe.

People often experience anxiety or unease when they are faced with a stressful situation, for example suffering from an illness or needing to make an important decision. During times like these, feeling anxious can be perfectly normal.

The recent changes to our behaviour, caused by the Coronavirus pandemic, has led to people feeling more stressed and anxious about going out, meeting people and connecting. In some cases, the loneliness and isolation has become acute and hard to cope with if you don't have access to the internet to video call someone and see a friendly face.

If your feelings of anxiety are more constant they can affect your daily life. For one in ten people, anxiety interferes with normal life and excessive anxiety is often linked with depression.

Anxiety is abnormal when it:

- is prolonged
- occurs when a stressful event has not taken place
- gets in the way of everyday activities

Another anxiety-related disorder is OCD (Obsessive Compulsive Disorder), where a person experiences frequent intrusive and unwelcome obsessional thoughts, often followed by repetitive compulsions, impulses or urges.

Visit **OCD-UK** for more help and advice on OCD.

Symptoms of Anxiety

The following are often symptoms of anxiety:

- feeling worried or uneasy a lot of the time
- feeling on edge or unable to relax
- feeling tearful
- needing frequent reassurance from other people
- irritability or anger
- being unable to concentrate
- difficulty sleeping
- fear of connecting with people if you are vulnerable to disease or the coronavirus

They physical symptoms of anxiety can include:

- dry mouth
- pounding heartbeat
- chest pains
- feeling sick
- shortness of breath
- dizziness
- frequent urination
- loss of appetite
- ‘butterflies’ in your tummy

Anxiety can be linked to a physical illness. Sometimes when that improves, the anxiety will improve. It can also be a symptom of another mental health problem, for example depression, personality disorder or alcohol misuse.

Treatment for Anxiety Disorders

In the first instance, it is important to speak to your GP who will be able to discuss your feelings, offer support and treatment, or refer you for specialist support. They may suggest things such as:

- **Counselling** for people with anxiety or minor depression
- **Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT)** for anxiety disorders, including obsessive compulsive disorder, phobias and panic disorders
- **Medication** if needed
- **Relaxation** exercises such as controlled breathing, deep muscle relaxation, visualisation
- **Mindfulness** to become more aware of the present moment and is proven to be effective at helping with stress and anxiety
- **Exercise** aerobic exercise will leave the heart slightly racing and releases the tension that builds up
- **Diet** reduce your intake of caffeine as much as possible

NHS Every Mind Matters has useful information about stress

Patient Information Centre has produced various mental health self help guides, including one about **anxiety**. There is a checklist to help you think about your symptoms.

Local help and advice

Read more about **local Mental health support services** on InformationNOW.

Tyneside and Northumberland Mind runs a Safe Space Service MEA House. It is an informal group that offers essential support to adults who are experiencing problems with their mental health and emotional wellbeing. The aim of the service is to provide a supportive peer group where people can reduce isolation, build confidence, improve their wellbeing and take positive steps towards their recovery. They also have counselling, wellbeing sessions and a telephone helpline open 7 days a week.

ReCoCo: The Recovery College College run various peer-led support groups, and free educational and creative courses, which are open to anyone who would find them helpful in their recovery from mental illness, substance misuse, trauma or distress.

Ways to Wellness service helps people in the West of Newcastle to manage their long-term conditions, which may include activities such as:

- Getting involved in local groups and activities
- Accessing specialist services and support
- Healthy eating and getting more active
- Getting support around benefits and welfare rights

Newcastle Libraries 'Reading Well Books on Prescription' scheme have a number of books available to borrow to help you manage your mental wellbeing. The titles chosen deal with issues such as anger, anxiety, fear, panic, worry, assertiveness, confidence, self-esteem, depression, eating disorders, fatigue and pain.

Newcastle Talking Helps are a commissioned service and effective in helping people with problems such as depression, anxiety, stress, anger, fears, bereavement and relationship difficulties.

A Time 2 Talk offers counselling to support individuals who are facing the impact of life changing events that can result in: anxiety, depression, stress, loss of employment, adjusting to new way of living, loss of living independently, moving to sheltered accommodation, mobility loss, sight impairment, relying on others for care. They can support individuals, their carers, partners, family members and friends.

Anxious Minds provides free confidential support for all suffers of anxiety and depression.

Mind have a range of online information and 2 telephone helplines. Info Line for general information and signposting on mental health issues. Legal Line for information and advice on mental health related law

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Other Useful Information

- **Counselling Directory**
- **Samaritans**
- **SANE**
- **Healthtalk.org**
- **NHS 111** You can call 111 when you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency.
- **NHS.UK** provides a website for health and medical advice and a symptom checker.
- **Life Coach Directory** provides information about different types of coaching including coaching for anxiety.
- **Do You Panic** is a website to help those who suffer from anxiety and to answer the many questions as to 'why' we suffer.

Please note – The content on this website is provided for general information only, and should not be treated as a substitute for the medical advice of your own doctor or

any other health care professional. If you are feeling unwell, make an appointment to see your GP or contact NHS 111. In an emergency, dial 999.

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Useful Organisations

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

Email: pals@nhct.nhs.uk

Website: https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/hospitals/what-is-pals-patient-advice-and-liaison-service/

Telephone: 0800 032 0202

Address: Freepost PALS,

Patient Information Centre – Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust (CNTW)

Website: www.cntw.nhs.uk

Telephone: 0191 246 7288

Address: St Nicholas Hospital, NE3 3XT

Samaritans

Email: jo@samaritans.org

Website: http://www.samaritans.org/branches/samaritans-tyneside

Telephone: 0191 232 7272

Address: Samaritan House, NE2 1QQ

Newcastle Libraries

Email: information@newcastle.gov.uk

Website: www.newcastle.gov.uk/leisure-libraries-and-tourism/libraries

Telephone: 0191 278 7878

Address: Newcastle City Library, NE1 8AX

Tyneside and Northumberland Mind

Email: admin@tynesidemind.org.uk

Website: www.tynesidemind.org.uk

Telephone: 0191 477 4545

Address: Tyneside and Northumberland Mind, NE16UF

Depression UK

Email: info@depressionuk.org

Website: www.depressionuk.org

Address: PO Box 10566 , NG13 8LU

British Register of Counsellors and Psychotherapists

Email: bacp@bacp.co.uk

Website: https://www.bacp.co.uk/

Address: BACP Register of Counsellors and Psychotherapists, LE17 4HB

SANE

Email: support@sane.org.uk

Website: www.sane.org.uk

Address: St. Mark's Studios, N7 8QJ

healthtalk.org

Email: info@healthtalkonline.org

Website: www.healthtalk.org

NHS 111

Website: www.nhs.uk/111

ReCoCo: The Recovery College Collective

Email: info@recoverycoco.com

Website: http://www.recoverycoco.com/

Telephone: 0191 261 0948

Address: 1 Carliol Square, NE1 6UF

A Time 2 Talk

Email: atime2talk@hotmail.com

Website: http://www.atime2talk.co.uk/

Telephone: 07538 891 325

Address: A Time 2 Talk, NE3 1PH

Carers UK

Email: Advice@carersuk.org

Website: www.carersuk.org

Telephone: 020 7378 4999

Address: 20 Great Dover Street,, SE1 4LX

Newcastle Carers

Email: info@newcastlecarers.org.uk

Website: www.newcastlecarers.org.uk

Telephone: 0191 275 5060

Address: 135-139 Shields Road, NE6 1DN

Psychological Wellbeing Services

Telephone: 0191 282 6600

Anxious Minds

Email: info@anxiousminds.co.uk

Website: https://www.anxiousminds.co.uk/

Telephone: 0191 262 0305

Address: (inside the) Creative Wellbeing Centre, NE28 6RL

Life Coach Directory

Website: https://www.lifecoach-directory.org.uk

Telephone: 0333 325 2501

Address: Building 3, GU15 3YL

Do You Panic

Email: will@doyoupanic.co.uk

Website: http://www.doyoupanic.co.uk

Mind UK

Email: info@mind.org.uk

Website: https://www.mind.org.uk/

Related Articles

Mental Health

Your Doctor or GP

Depression

Mental health emergency or crisis services

Hyperventilation

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