

When is worry too much?

When it stops you from doing what you love.



Learn More
About Anxiety +
Take Action



CCSMH

Canadian Coalition for
Seniors' Mental Health
Connecting People, Ideas
and Resources

Understanding Anxiety

You might know anxiety as worry, fear, or nervousness. Anxiety is one of the regular feelings people experience every day. How often you feel anxious, how intense the anxiety is, and the things that make you anxious are unique to you.

Sometimes anxious feelings become a lot to handle and it might be time to act. Excessive or large amounts of anxiety are not an expected part of aging.

There is hope.



Symptom Checklist

You might be experiencing some of the symptoms below:

Mental Symptoms

- ◇ I worry a lot or expect the worst.
- ◇ I avoid uncomfortable situations.
- ◇ I feel scared or panicky.
- ◇ I can't concentrate.
- ◇ I am afraid of falling.

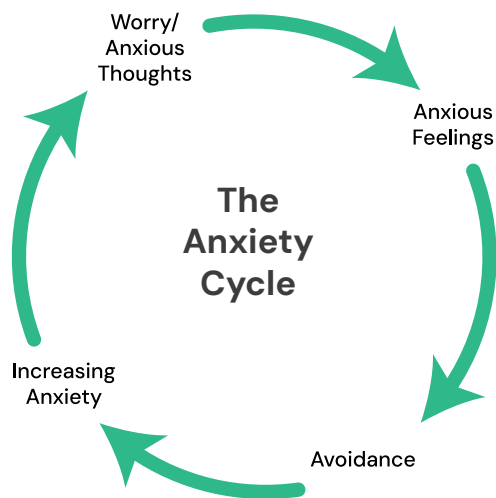
Physical Symptoms

- ◇ I feel restless.
- ◇ I have palpitations or chest pain.
- ◇ I am sweating more than usual.
- ◇ I feel shaky inside.
- ◇ I don't sleep well.
- ◇ I have headaches.
- ◇ I have stomach upset/feel butterflies.
- ◇ I feel fatigued.

What can cause excessive anxiety?

We all experience stressful situations (e.g., life changes, losses, medical issues, etc.) and most of the time we find ways to cope. But sometimes the anxiety doesn't go away.

The cycle of anxiety shows how anxious thoughts and feelings can lead us to avoiding situations. This can give us short term relief, but if we don't find a way to deal with our anxious thoughts, the feelings return and the cycle continues.



When the feelings continue or the behaviour stops you from doing what you love, it is time to take action.

Talk with a health professional

Anxiety is an illness like any other. Talking with a health professional is a major step to getting help and feeling better.

To understand if anxiety is an issue, a health professional will:

- Discuss your thoughts and feelings with you.
- Ask about what is happening in your life.
- Possibly do a physical exam.
- Run tests to rule out other causes.
- Discuss possible treatments such as medication or psychotherapy.

Treatments

- Get involved with mindfulness/meditation.
- Check out self-help books and videos.
- Speak with a trained therapist.
- Take medication as prescribed.



There are many ways to start feeling better

Small lifestyle changes you can try to break the cycle and lessen your anxiety:

- Be active – even a little bit can help!
- Take small steps towards doing the things you love.
- Spend time with others.
- Join in local activities.
- Try mindfulness, meditation, or relaxation.
- Read self-help books, watch videos, and visit websites.



You deserve to be well and to enjoy your whole life.



There is hope. You are not alone.

Your important phone numbers

Use this area to record numbers of organizations and services that can help you.

Emergency: 911

Suicide Crisis Helpline: 988

Doctor: _____

Counsellor / Therapist: _____

Pharmacist: _____

Distress / Crisis Line: _____

Local branch of
Canadian Mental
Health Association: _____

Spiritual Leader or other
community supports: _____

You can learn ways to be more comfortable, relaxed, motivated, and feel at ease.

You don't have to accept too much or unnecessary anxiety as a part of aging. Anxiety can be managed.
You can start today!





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For more information visit the
Canadian Coalition for Seniors'
Mental Health (CCSMH) website:
ccsmh.ca

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