



Let's Talk: Older Adults & Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)

What is CBT?

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) is a type of mental health treatment. It is one form of talk therapy that is designed to help you better understand how your thoughts, feelings and behaviours impact each other. CBT can help treat many mental health concerns, including anxiety, depression and sleep challenges.

CBT is structured around setting goals. It does not examine your past. Instead, it helps you change how you approach situations in your day-to-day life. CBT is typically a short-term therapy (weeks to months).

What would I do in CBT?

CBT teaches strategies you can use right away. You may learn:

- Relaxation techniques (e.g., belly breathing, progressive muscle relaxation).
- How to reframe your thoughts so they are more helpful to you.
- Information about mental health in general or your specific mental health condition.
- How to work with your fears.

You will be asked to do homework in between sessions and apply what you have learned. Your loved ones can also be involved in the process if you like.



There are many tools that are taught in CBT. You do not have to use them all. You can take what works for you and leave the rest.





How can I access CBT?

CBT is widely available, often for low cost or for free. There are different ways to access CBT depending on your time and budget, including:

- Books and apps that teach you CBT strategies
- Group programs
- Individual therapy

CBT with a trained therapist can be offered online, over the phone or in-person. Group CBT can cost less than seeing a mental health care provider one-on-one and can help you reach your goals in a supportive environment alongside others facing similar challenges.

Professionals who provide CBT can include registered psychologists, psychotherapists, social workers, nurses and more.



How do I know if CBT is for me?

If you think CBT could help you, you can access free resources or talk to your health care provider about where to find CBT in your area. Free CBT resources include:

- [SleepWell](#)
- [MindShift® CBT App](#) (Anxiety Canada)
- [BounceBack program](#) (Canadian Mental Health Association)

**If you are facing challenges, know there is hope.
You deserve to feel well and enjoy life.**

