



ANXIETY

Anxiety is a word we use to describe feelings of unease, worry and fear. It incorporates both the emotions and the physical sensations we might experience when we are worried or nervous about something. We all know what it's like to feel anxious from time to time. However some people find it harder to control their worries, and their feelings of anxiety are constant and affect their daily lives.

What are the symptoms of anxiety?

Anxiety can affect everyone in different ways, and it has a range of symptoms. The symptoms can be divided into 2 categories: psychological and physical.

Psychological include:

- feeling constantly on 'edge'
- difficulty concentrating
- withdrawing from social contact/ work

Physical include:

- tiredness
- muscle aches and tension
- feeling sick

If you feel anxious because of a specific phobia or panic disorder you will usually know what triggers these symptoms. However with a generalised anxiety disorder it's not always clear what you're feeling anxious about and this unknown trigger may intensify your anxiety. You may feel like there's no solution out there- but there is! With the right help, many people are able to control their anxiety levels.

For more information on the symptoms, triggers and help for anxiety, visit the NHS website: www.NHS.uk/conditions/generalised-anxiety-disorder

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Anxiety itself is the symptom of a number of conditions such as panic disorders, different phobias, post- traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and social anxiety disorder.

Generalised anxiety disorder (GAD)

however causes people to feel anxious not about one specific event but rather a wide range of issues and situations.

There is no exact known cause of GAD. However it has been suggested that it may be due to a combination of factors. These factors may include the genes you inherit from your parents, an imbalance of the brain chemicals serotonin and noradrenaline, experiencing traumatic life events, or having a painful long-term health condition.

HOW CAN ANXIETY BE TREATED?

There are several treatments that can ease your symptoms and reduce your anxiety, like psychological therapies (such as cognitive behavioural therapy), medications, and self-help methods like exercising regularly, stopping smoking, cutting down on the amount of alcohol and caffeine you drink, and going on self-help courses.

Your GP will be able to recommend the best treatment for you, but if you want to talk to someone about your anxiety and how it may be affecting you, call to the **Student Wellbeing Drop-In Service** (via the Student Guidance Centre information desk), Mon-Fri term time, 12.30-1.30pm, or **email studentwellbeing@qub.ac.uk** for an appointment with a Wellbeing Advisor.

Take5

steps to wellbeing



Most of us know when we are mentally and physically well, but sometimes we need a little extra support to keep well.



There are five simple actions to help maintain and improve your emotional wellbeing in everyday life. Try to build these into your daily life – think of them as your ‘five a day’ for emotional wellbeing.



Connect

Connect with the people around you, with family, friends, colleagues and neighbours at home, work, school or in your local community. Think of these as the cornerstones of your life and invest time in developing them. Building these connections will support and enrich you everyday.



Be active

Go for a walk or run, step outside, cycle, play a game, garden or dance. Exercising makes you feel good. Most importantly, discover a physical activity that you enjoy; one that suits your level of mobility and fitness.



Take notice

Be curious, catch sight of the beautiful, remark on the unusual, notice the changing seasons. Savour the moment, whether you are on a bus or taxi, eating lunch or talking to friends, be aware of the world around you and what you are feeling. Reflecting on your experiences will help you appreciate what matters to you.



Keep learning

Don't be afraid to try something new, rediscover an old hobby or interest or sign up for that course. Take on a different responsibility, fix a bike, learn to play an instrument or how to cook your favourite food. Set a challenge you will enjoy achieving. Learning new things will make you more confident, as well as being fun to do.



Give to others

Do something nice for a friend, or a stranger, thank someone, smile, volunteer your time, or consider joining a community group. Look out, as well as in, seeing yourself, and your happiness linked to the wider community can be incredibly rewarding and will create connections with the people around you.

The 5 ways to wellbeing were developed by the New Economics Foundation

www.mindingyourhead.info

Would you like to share your story on the back of this leaflet? If so please email studentwellbeing@qub.ac.uk

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