

Tips to Help Calm Anxiety

Try these relaxation techniques to take the edge off your worry.



Most people feel anxious from time to time, such as before taking a test, after a major life change such as losing a job or when they're about to give a presentation. But if you're worrying excessively most days and struggle to control those feelings for at least six months, you may have generalized anxiety disorder (GAD).

Symptoms of GAD

Along with too much worry, here are some other physical symptoms you may experience:

- Restlessness or feeling wound up or edgy
- Stomach issues, such as nausea
- Trouble concentrating
- Grumpiness or irritability
- Sleep problems, such as insomnia

Doctors aren't sure what causes GAD, but most believe it's a combination of environmental and genetic factors. It can come and go over time, and stressful situations can be a trigger.

Get support

If you have GAD or are concerned that you may have this condition, talk with your provider about the treatment that best fits your needs. Most cases of generalized anxiety disorder can be successfully managed with therapies like cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), medication or a combination of both.

Take care of yourself

In addition to working with your provider, self-soothing techniques can help, too. Here are a few methods that can please one or more of your senses:

- **Sight.** Look at a favorite piece of artwork or cherished photos, or take a walk in a picturesque setting. Consider other ways you may enjoy to take your mind off worry, such as coloring in a coloring book.
- **Sound.** Listen to a favorite song that inspires you or holds a special meaning. Sit near a fountain or a bubbling brook.
- **Smell.** Literally stop and smell the roses. Consider seeking out smells that will bring back pleasant memories — the area in the brain that processes memories is located next to the area that processes scents.
- **Taste.** Savor a bite of gourmet dark chocolate, a sip of special tea or a juicy piece of fresh fruit.
- **Touch.** Take a warm bath, wrap up in a blanket, or snuggle your pet. Hug a friend.
- **Movement.*** Get out and garden, take a walk or stretch your muscles. Move however it works for you!

Get the guidance you need, so you can take steps to help ease your symptoms, feel better and enjoy your life.

*If you're pregnant, physically inactive or have a health condition such as arthritis, diabetes or heart disease, check with your provider before starting an exercise program or increasing your activity level. He or she can tell you what types and amounts of activities are safe for you.

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Sources

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