

Understanding Anxiety

WORKPLACE
TRAINING
& SUPPORT
SERVICE

What is Anxiety?

Symptoms of Anxiety

Main Types of Anxiety

Treating Anxiety

What is Anxiety?

Anxiety is a normal response that we all experience when we are having problems in our life, or are experiencing dangerous or unknown situations. This form of anxiety only lasts for a few hours to a couple of days, and it only has a minimum effect on our health and wellbeing. Also, in many situations anxiety is beneficial as it helps us perform at our peak.

However, too much anxiety is overwhelming and it prevents us from living a life that we would enjoy. Anxiety becomes a problem when it becomes constant, pervasive and/or excessive.

Therefore, anxiety disorders are a group of mental illnesses that cause people to feel excessively frightened, distressed and worried during situations in which most people would not experience these same feelings.

Symptoms of Anxiety

People who have an anxiety disorder will experience fear and panic. Depending on the type of anxiety disorder that a person has they may also experience some of the following:

- Persistent/unrealistic worry
- Fear and/or sudden intense panic
- Inability to work/study
- Reoccurring intrusive compulsions and obsessions that can't be controlled
- Social isolation/withdrawal
- Nightmares/flashbacks of traumatic event(s)
- Intense/irrational fear of objects/situations (phobias)
- Difficulty concentrating, sleeping, work and/or relationships.

Main Types of Anxiety

Everyone experiences anxiety differently. In order to determine the best type of treatment we first need to understand the type of anxiety we have. Below are the six main types of anxiety.



Treating Anxiety

Different anxiety disorders require slightly different approaches to treatment.

Successful treatment strategies involve:

- Counselling / therapy
- Medication

It is also important that you:

- Build relationships with people important to you.
- A good diet and regular exercise
- Minimise or eliminate caffeine intake, smoking and alcohol.
- Find ways to relax (music, reading, fun activities)