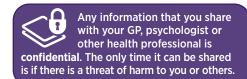


ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION: FIND THE PATH THAT WORKS FOR YOU

Anxiety and depression can make you feel like you're not your usual self. Your journey to feeling like yourself again will not look the same as anyone else's because anxiety and depression affects everyone differently.

Many options are available to help you manage anxiety and depression. Your GP might suggest one, or a combination of things, to try.

You know yourself best! If the first step you take doesn't feel like the right one, keep trying different things to find the path that works for you.



Your GP can support you in choosing the next steps to take. Here are some questions you can ask:

1. What are my options?									
Many lifestyle changes, supports and treatments can help. Talk to your GP about your options, including:									
\bigcirc	Staying active Making time to do things	\bigcirc	Joining social activities Trying an online mental	\bigcirc	Cutting back on alcohol and other drugs	\bigcirc	Seeing a mental health professional		
	you enjoy		health program	\bigcirc	Learning how to deal	\bigcirc	Taking a medicine		
	Talking to a close friend or family member	\bigcirc	Eating well Practicing mindfulness	\bigcirc	with stress Getting support for work	\bigcirc	Other		
	Improving sleep		and relaxation		or study				

2. Why are these the best options for me?

Each option will have pros and cons. Ask your GP how these options will best meet your needs. Don't be afraid to talk to your GP about the things you want to try. This will help them work with you to create a care plan just for you.

3. When will I feel better?

Ask when you should start feeling better. If you are taking a medicine or waiting to see a mental health professional, feeling better may take time.

In the meantime, try some of the other things in the box above. Speak with someone you trust about the way you're feeling. You can connect with **e-headspace** for phone or online counselling. **Head to Health** can also help you find online mental health treatment programs.

4. What if I don't feel better?

There are always other options. If nothing's working or you're feeling worse, go back to your GP. Tell someone if you're having thoughts of harming yourself, or call one of the numbers below:

5. How much does it cost?

Ask your GP about cost. If something is too expensive, ask about another option.

Lifeline 13 11 14 or text 0477 13				
Suicide Call Back Service 1300				
Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800				

For immediate assistance or in an emergency



31 114 659 467

Notes:	

Helpful links:

▶ headspace.org.au ▶ beyondblue.org.au ▶ reachout.com

Seeing a mental health professional

There are lots of different types of mental health professionals, like counsellors, psychologists and psychiatrists. Find out more at **ReachOut** and **Beyond Blue**.

Finding the right person for you can take time. Your GP can suggest someone, or they can refer you to a person you have chosen. You may not connect with the first mental health professional you meet for a range of reasons. That's OK. If it's still not working after a few sessions, ask your GP, family and friends for recommendations. Websites like

psychology.org.au can also help you to find someone who is a better fit.

Ask your GP about the mental health professional:



Why do you think their skills and experience will help me?



Will their cultural background, personality, or speciality be a good match for my needs?



How long will it take me to get an appointment?



How much do they charge? Are any of the costs covered by Medicare or private health insurance? Are there any free or low-cost options?



Where are they located?



Will their working hours fit in with my routine?

Ask the questions that are important to you, to help your GP find someone who suits your needs.

Taking medicine

Some people with anxiety or depression are prescribed a medicine, such as an antidepressant.

Ask your GP or psychiatrist: Why is this medicine a good option for me?

They can explain the benefits of taking an antidepressant, or other medicine that is prescribed for you.

All medicines have side effects, including those for anxiety and depression.

Some side effects go away over time as your body gets used to the medicine.

Ask: What are the possible side effects of the medicine? How can I reduce or manage these side effects?

Some people notice changes to their:







Weight





Energy levels

Sexual response

Tell your GP or psychiatrist about any side effects that concern you and discuss other options if needed.

Try to be open and honest with your GP. Let your GP know if you:

▶ use alcohol or other drugs regularly. ▶ think you might be pregnant

It helps them know which medicines will be safer for you or if any aspects of your lifestyle could affect how your medicine works.

Fill out the space below to help you remember what your GP tells you about your medicine:

If you do not feel better, make an appointment with your GP. Do not stop taking the medicine without speaking to your doctor.

There are many **online mental** health programs and courses

you can try, such as **Mental** Health Online, MindSpot,

moodGYM and This Way Up.

nps.org.au

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