



# Understanding Anxiety



## What is anxiety?

Anxiety is normal – everyone experiences anxiety at some point. It can also be called worry, fear, being scared or being frightened.

If we experience a lot of anxiety, it can impact on our day. For example, it can stop us from going out or seeing our friends.

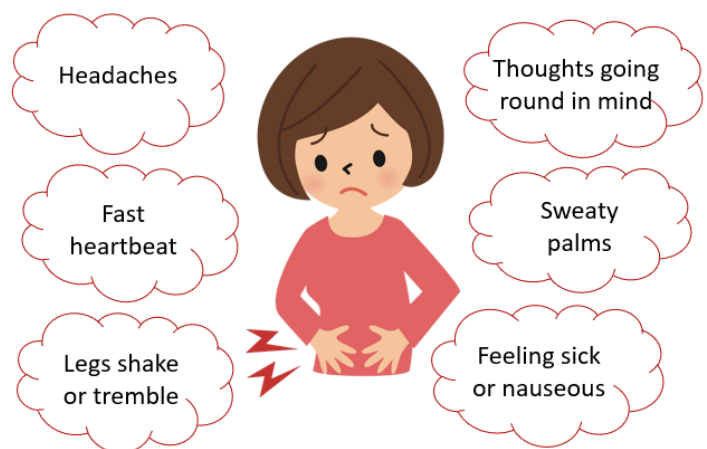
## Common causes of anxiety

There are many different causes of anxiety and they change from person to person. These can include:

- Big life events such as starting a new school or moving house.
- Change and uncertainty
- A frightening experience
- Family, friendship or relationship issues.

## What is going on in your body when you feel anxious?

When you feel anxious, lots of things happen to your body. This is called the adrenaline response, or "fight or flight". Adrenaline is a hormone that gets released into your body and can cause a whole range of physical feelings as the body is preparing itself to fight or run away. Whilst these feelings are uncomfortable, they are not dangerous and will pass.



Try and practice these when you are not feeling anxious!

## Ways to help when you feel **anxious**

- Deep Breathing

One simple strategy is using breathing exercises. This can help to calm down the adrenaline response. Breathe in slowly for 3 seconds, hold for 3 seconds and then breathe out for 3 seconds.

- Self talk

Remind yourself that it is anxiety and you will be okay.

- Imagery

Think of a place where you feel safe, e.g., a beach, your home or your favourite park. Close your eyes and use your 5 senses to imagine this place in the best possible detail..

- Grounding techniques

Focus on the things around you. Say out loud 5 things you can see, 4 things you can hear, 3 things you can touch, 2 things you can smell, and 1 thing you can taste.

### Take a Deep Breath


Smell the flower





Blow the pinwheel




 5 things you can see

 4 things you can hear

 3 things you can touch

 2 things you can smell

 1 thing you can taste

## Further help or support

Some useful mobile apps for understanding and managing anxiety:



Chill Panda



SAM



Smiling  
Mind



Mindshift  
CBT

If you feel like you need a bit more support with managing feelings of anxiety, it is okay to ask for extra help. Talk to your parents, family doctor, health visitor or a school nurse.

If you have access to a phone or the internet, you can also get support from:

- Young Minds (0-25 years old) = Text YM to 85258 ([www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk))

**YOUNGMINDS**  
fighting for young people's mental health

- Chat Health (11-19 years old) = Text 07480 635060 (<https://chathealth.nhs.uk>)

 ChatHealth

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