

- **Try to be active every day—especially if you don't feel like it!** Physical activity is a great way to cope with anxiety and boost your mood at the same time. Even a short walk every day can make a big difference!
- **Try to eat well.** When you don't feel well or don't have a lot of energy, it's easy to reach for options that aren't very healthy. The physical sensations of anxiety can make it hard to eat, as well. Caffeine can really boost anxiety, so it's a good idea to be careful around things like coffee, tea, caffeinated pop, and energy drinks. Try to aim for good nutrition to keep you fuelled throughout the day. Talk to your doctor or counsellor if you have a hard time building a healthy relationship with food.
- **Try to find healthy ways to relax.** Learning how to turn down the volume of anxious thoughts or feelings—even just for a short time—is a huge part of managing anxiety. It might sound impossible if you're very anxious right now, but with a little effort and practice it's a realistic goal for everyone. You can try listening to music, watching a funny video, going for a walk outside, practicing your faith, or whatever helps you. There are apps and websites to help you try relaxation skills like meditation and mindfulness, such as www.keltymentalhealth.ca/breathr and www.headspace.com. Visit www.heretohelp.bc.ca/wellness-modules for more tips on mindfulness and stress management. Be mindful of using alcohol or other drugs to relax—they usually make anxiety worse and harder to manage in the long run.

LEARN MORE

HeretoHelp at www.heretohelp.bc.ca has information about many different mental health problems. You can also read personal stories, find self-care ideas in the Wellness Modules, learn more about treatments, and take screening self-tests to check your mental health.

AnxietyBC has information on anxiety and anxiety disorders and self-help resources to help you manage anxiety at home. They have a site for youth at youth.anxietybc.com. Their free app, MindShift, can help you learn more helpful ways to think and helpful ways to relax. The app has tools for situations like text anxiety, performance anxiety, perfectionism, and conflict.

Blue Wave, a program from the Canadian Mental Health Association's BC Division, helps youth take charge of their mental health and share their voice. Visit www.bluewavebc.ca to find information and resources, learn about wellness courses and bursaries, or get involved.

Mindcheck at www.mindcheck.ca helps you look at your mental health and find resources or support. You can take a quiz to check your mental health, and their self-care resources include apps and websites you can try on your own.

WANT MORE INFO ON ANXIETY?

This brochure is part of a series on youth and anxiety. To learn more about anxiety and what it might look like, see Learn about Anxiety: For Youth at www.heretohelp.bc.ca/for-youth.

FOR YOUTH

DEALING WITH ANXIETY



Canadian Mental Health Association
British Columbia
Mental health for all



Canadian Mental Health Association
British Columbia
Mental health for all

The Canadian Mental Health Association, BC Division is proud to be affiliated with HeretoHelp. HeretoHelp is a project of the BC Partners for Mental Health and Addictions Information, a group of non-profit agencies providing good-quality information to help individuals and families maintain or improve their mental well-being. The BC Partners are funded by BC Mental Health and Substance Use Services, an agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority.

in partnership with



heretohelp

Mental health and substance use information you can trust

If anxiety is bothering you, there are steps you can take.

GET HELP

Even if you're not sure you have a problem, it's a good idea to talk with a parent or other trusted adult. Asking for help is not always easy, but it's the first step towards feeling better. Remember that you don't have to have all the answers when you ask for help. You just need to know that something doesn't seem right and you want to know what's going on. Here are some people you can talk to:

Parents, caregivers, other family members

Talking with your family can be very hard! It's helpful to think about what you want to say and what you need from your family. You can find tips to help you plan ahead at www.bluewavebc.ca/take-action.

Depending on your age, you may need a parent or guardian to help you see your doctor or other mental health specialists. If you really don't feel like you can talk to your parents, try talking with another family member, a school counsellor, a friend's parent, or any other adult you trust.

Your doctor

Your doctor is an important part of your recovery. Your doctor may be able to treat you on their own or your doctor will help you see a specialist like a psychiatrist.

A lot of people feel nervous when they talk with their doctor. It's helpful to think about your doctor's appointment ahead of time so you can make the most of the time. You can find tips to help you talk with your doctor at www.bluewavebc.ca/take-action.

School counsellor, teacher, school staff

It's your school counsellor's job to help people who are going through a difficult situation! Your school counsellor is there to listen and can help you find mental health resources and connect you to support. If anxiety makes it hard to do well at school, your school might be able to help. For example, your school may give you more time to take tests or more time to complete homework.

FEEL BETTER

Problems with anxiety, including anxiety disorders, are very treatable. You should expect to feel better again. The exact treatment will depend on your own situation. In general, it may include some mix of the following:

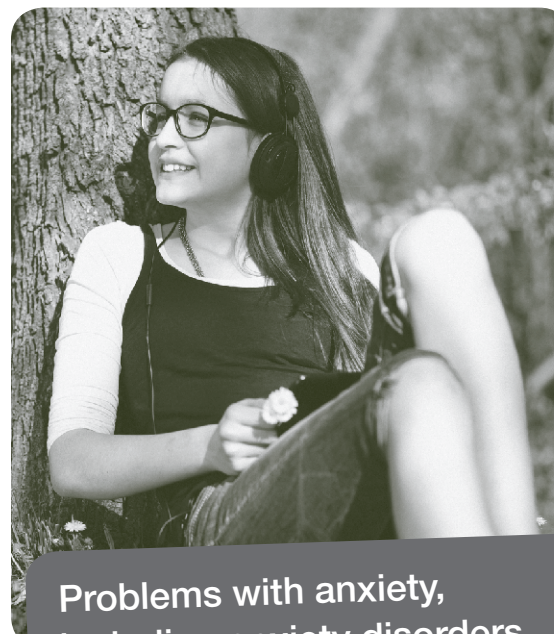
Counselling

Counselling or "talk therapy" can help you understand what you are experiencing. Many types of therapy focus on skills to help you manage anxiety problems. A type of therapy

called cognitive-behavioural therapy or CBT is a common and effective type of therapy, and it may work just as well as medicine for less serious anxiety problems.

Medicine

Your doctor may prescribe medicine if your anxiety problem is more serious or isn't improving with other treatments. The most common medicines are antidepressants and anti-anxiety medications. Antidepressants are taken regularly to reduce symptoms over time. It may take several weeks to notice changes. Anti-anxiety medicine quickly lowers some anxiety symptoms for a short period of time. In most cases, they are meant to be used only once in a while, when you



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IF YOU NEED TO TALK TO SOMEONE RIGHT AWAY

For free help by trained distress line workers:

- BC Mental Health Support line at 310-6789 (no area code needed)—available 24/7
- Kids Help Phone at kidshelpphone.ca and 1-800-668-6868—available 24/7
- Youth in BC at youthinbc.com—chat live online—available noon to 1am Pacific Time
- Youth Space at youthspace.ca—talk to someone via text message—available 24/7

really need extra help. It's important to talk with your doctor about what to expect and follow their instructions as closely as possible. Be sure to tell your doctor about any herbal or alternative treatments you are using, too.

Support from others

Anxiety problems can make you feel like you're all alone. Support groups are a great way to meet others and see what works for them. Talk to your doctor/counsellor or contact one of the organizations in the Learn More section to see if they know of a good support group. If you can't find a support group in your community, you can find support online. A lot of schools are also starting mental health clubs.

Self-care at home

Self-care is exactly what it sounds like: little things you can do every day to take care of yourself. Self-care doesn't have to be big or complicated to make a difference. We have some suggestions listed below. You can also talk to your doctor or other mental health professional for more ideas.

- **Try to get enough sleep every night.** It's hard to feel good when you're tired! Teens need more sleep than adults. You can find tips to get a good night's sleep at www.heretohelp.bc.ca/wellness-modules. If you often can't sleep well, talk to your doctor or mental health professional. Many people who experience anxiety problems have a hard time sleeping well, so it's important to practice good sleep habits.