

ANXIETY

With home invasions, terrorist attacks, lack of job security and rising electricity prices we live at a time when nothing seems certain except anxiety.

What is the difference between Anxiety, Worry and Depression?

- Anxiety is a feeling of unease or nervousness about something with an uncertain outcome. Worry is often considered to be part of anxiety and the two words may be used interchangeably. While everybody experiences anxious feeling from time to time, anxiety is particularly characterised by these feeling does not quickly pass.
- Depression is difference to anxiety and worry as it refers to feelings of despondency or dejection. Anxiety that goes on for an extended period may lead to depression.

Is Anxiety bad for our Health?

- Short periods of anxiety are totally normal, such as before a job interview. Usually this anxiety resolves very quickly.
- Extended periods of anxiety have the potential to be bad for health. Hormones such as adrenalin are released during these times which can cause an increase in blood pressure, insomnia and poor digestion.
- We may also have behavioural changes during these times as we try to avoid the thing causing the anxiety. For example, if we are worried about our job security we may not take time off when we are sick and end up even more unwell.

Does Resolving the Issue Causing Anxiety Work?

- If you resolve the issue causing the anxiety this will certainly help. For example, if your anxiety is being caused by a toxic work situation, changing jobs may resolve the issue and your anxiety goes.

What if the Issue Can't be Resolved?

- Some issues, such as the potential for a terrorist attack, can't be resolved. In these cases, it is necessary to take steps to manage our anxiety so it doesn't overwhelm our lives.

What can We do to Manage Anxiety?

- Maintaining a healthy lifestyle is important. Eat a balanced diet, don't drink too much alcohol or take illicit drugs and sleep all helps.
- Exercise is important – even going for a short walk each day – as this helps to burn off some of that adrenalin.
- Relaxation helps to calm your mind, release muscle tension and regulate your breathing. Consider meditation, stretch classes or one of the many relaxation CDs, DVDs, podcasts or apps available.
- Connect with other people – meeting friends and family reminds us that we aren't in this alone and sharing a hug can be very therapeutic!
- Do something you find enjoyable – every day! This can distract us from our worries and remind us there are satisfying and fun things in the world too!
- Acupuncture and massage are also great for anxiety.

What if this Doesn't help?

- If anxiety is interfering in your daily life despite trying these things see a doctor – you may need a referral to a counsellor or medication to help manage your anxiety.