

Anxiety



What is Anxiety?

Anxiety is an emotion which gives someone an unpleasant feeling of tension and worry. It can be triggered by a stressful event or if someone feels under threat. Anxiety is a normal emotion; however, when anxiety is persistent, interferes with normal routines, and does not go away with reassurance and comfort, it is classified as an anxiety disorder.

Symptoms

Symptoms of anxiety can be both physical and psychological, and anxiety will feel different for different people. Common symptoms include:

Physical	Psychological
Headaches/stomach aches	Excessive worrying
Feeling sick	Feeling nervous
Difficulty sleeping	Fearing the worst
Sweaty palms	Feeling your mind is really busy with thoughts
Fast heartbeat	Feeling restless

Anxiety can interplay with Tourette Syndrome (TS) in different ways.

- Anxiety can trigger and exacerbate tics
- Anxiety disorders can coexist separately to TS
- Social anxiety may develop due to unwanted attention of tics
- Anxiety may be due to OCD symptoms
- Side effects of some medication taken to relieve tics, can sometimes increase anxiety.

Managing Anxiety

Treatments for managing anxiety are well researched; the two clinical options are medication and/or psychological therapies. There are also lots of recommended self-care approaches to help manage anxiety, including breathing practices, exercise and relaxation training. It is possible to learn to control and reduce the impact of unhelpful levels of anxiety. Organisations listed at the end of this document have further information about self-care approaches.

If you suspect that you or your child has an anxiety disorder, the first step is to see your GP. They will be able to make an initial diagnosis, and will refer you to a specialist, if needed, for further assessment and treatment.

For more information and support you can contact the following organisations:

Anxiety UK – a national charity supporting adults and children with anxiety

www.anxietyuk.org.uk
08444 775 774

Mind – a national charity offering advice and support to anyone experiencing a mental health issue

www.mind.org.uk
0300 123 3393