

What to do if you're anxious or depressed

This fact sheet is for children, young people and people with disability who are feeling anxious or depressed, and their families and friends.

Some resources here are on the internet. If you don't have the internet, ask your support worker or friend to print the information, or use the internet at your local library or a friend's house.

What do depressed and anxious look like?

- **You may be depressed** if you're sad and tired all the time and don't enjoy things you used to like. You may also have no energy. [Find out more.](#)
- **You may be anxious** if you're worried all the time and think bad things are going to happen. You may also be scared and stressed, and panic a lot. [Find out more.](#)

Why are you anxious or depressed and what can you do about it?

Have you suffered abuse, neglect or other trauma recently or as a child?

- [Talk to someone about your trauma.](#)
- Get support through the National Counselling Referral Service for people with disability – **phone 1800 421 468** or find out more [here.](#)
- [Read fact sheets, watch videos and learn more](#) about healing and support.
- [Phoenix Australia](#) offer treatment and counselling for children and adults with trauma – for people caring for children and young people with trauma, click [here.](#)

Do you find activities and challenges everyone else takes for granted hard? everyday life a struggle? Do you feel too much is going on for you to cope with? Are you lonely and think no-one understands you?

- Talk to someone you trust. It can be hard to talk about how you feel. Get help [here.](#)
- Phone a support line for people with depression and anxiety.
 - [Beyond Blue](#) – call 1300 22 4636 (24 hours a day 7 days a week) or [chat online](#)
 - [Sane](#) – call 1800 187 263 from 10am- 8pm Monday to Friday AEST/AEDT or [get ongoing support](#)
 - [KidsHelpline](#) for young people aged 5-25 – call 1800 55 1800 (24 hours a day 7 days a week) or join [My Circle](#) online (for people aged 12-25)
 - [13Yarn](#) for First Nations people – call 13 92 76 (24 hours a day 7 days a week)
- Join a local support group and meet with people who have similar mental health issues. Ask your local council or library, or look on community noticeboards.
 - [Headspace](#) for young people has support groups that meet in their centres in all states and territories - see a map [here.](#)

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- Make more of your own choices and decisions. People who control their lives are less likely to be anxious or depressed. Do these online courses with a friend about making good choices [here](#) and making decisions [here](#).
- Make your thoughts more helpful and less negative. [Moodgym](#) and [MyCompass](#) use techniques from [cognitive behavioural therapy](#) to help you identify patterns in your thinking and change your behaviour. These can be fun and useful, especially if you do them with a friend or family member.
- Exercise. Go for a walk in nature, go to the gym or dance to music with friends.
 - Your state or territory government department of sport, or your local council, can give you information about sports teams and activities for people with disability.
 - If you live in NSW or Victoria, [Freedom Solutions](#) run events where people with disability can try various sports. Click [here](#) for upcoming events.

Are you grieving because someone you love has died or moved away or something has changed in your life that's made you sad?

Grief can make you feel depressed and anxious, and can last for a long time. For help, contact [Griefline](#) on 1300 845 745, 8am-8pm AEST, Monday to Friday. There are also [24/7 online forums](#).

Are you taking medication with anxiety or depression as side effects? Do you have an illness that means you're in pain a lot? Do you feel out of control?

Go to the doctor. The doctor can:

- change medication that has anxiety or depression as side effects
- prescribe pain medication
- give you medication for your anxiety or depression - this can be very effective and the doctor can check the medication does not react with other medication you take
- for serious mental health issues, put you in touch with someone who can help – this could be a counsellor or therapist, psychiatrist or psychologist.

To help the doctor, give them as much information as you can.

- Do an [online assessment here](#), and take the results to the doctor.
- Compile a folder [here](#) to tell the doctor how you communicate and how you feel.

You have the right to good medical treatment.

- Ask the doctor as many questions as you like. Help with questions to ask is [here](#).
- If the doctor talks to you in language you can't understand, ask them to explain what they mean in simple terms.

Thinking of suicide or think someone could be suicidal?

Call Lifeline [here](#), Suicide Call Back Service [here](#) or Kids Helpline [here](#) right now.