



ANXIETY



- Do you anticipate a negative outcome?
- Are you overly concerned about money, health or family?
- Does your everyday stress affect your quality of life?

It's normal to experience occasional anxiety but if this feeling is excessive or interferes with your quality of life, you may have an anxiety disorder.

Symptoms

Anxiety disorders are the most common mental disorder in the United States. The symptoms of anxiety often develop over time in older adults and may not be obvious. Anxiety disorder symptoms are often ignored because everyone does experience anxiety to a certain degree. However, it is important to be able to identify the differences between anxiety and an anxiety disorder. Anxiety disorders can worsen if left untreated.

There are many different signs of anxiety disorder, and these symptoms can be experienced in a range of ways, including:

- Excessive worry or fear
- Avoiding social situations
- Overly concerned about safety
- Racing heart
- Shallow breathing
- Poor sleep
- Depression
- Muscle tension
- Feeling weak and shaky

Anxiety Management

There many different ways to manage your anxiety. Keep in mind, everyone is different and not all of these strategies will work for you.

Slow breathing

Your breath tends to become faster or shallow when anxious. Focus on regulating your breath by exhaling longer than your inhales

Stay in the present moment

Don't let your thoughts run wild about the future. Bring yourself back to the present moment

Healthy lifestyle

Stay active and eat well. Doing activities you enjoy can help reduce anxiety and improve your health

Challenge your self-talk

Instead of thinking of the worst-case scenario, try to think of different interpretations for the situation

Be kind to yourself

Don't consider yourself weak just because you have a mental health condition. You are more than your anxiety

Get to know your anxiety

Keep a record of your anxiety at all stages (best and worst). Look for patterns that could help manage it

If you think that you might have anxiety, contact your Primary Care Provider (PCP) and schedule an appointment to discuss.

Sources: <https://adaa.org> <https://www.beyondblue.org.au>

MeridianComplete is a health plan that contracts with both Medicare and Illinois Medicaid to provide benefits of both programs to enrollees.

ATTENTION: If you speak English, language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. Call **1-855-580-1689** (TTY: **711**).

ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al **1-855-580-1689** (TTY: **711**).