

Addiction and Mental Health News

Anxiety

It's more common than you think



It can affect anyone

Anxiety is a normal part of life, but too much can be harmful. It's what you do about it that makes a difference to your well-being.

Treating anxiety

If anxiety is interfering in your life and self-help strategies are not working, it is a good idea to see your doctor or another health professional. Sometimes anxiety can be controlled using medications.

For more information or for available programs and services in your area contact:

Mental Health Help Line
1-877-303-2642
Addiction Help Line
1-866-332-2322
HEALTHLINK Alberta
1-866-408-5465

What is anxiety?

Everyone experiences anxiety. And that's a good thing! Anxiety helps you prepare for important events or react to dangerous situations. You may feel anxious when you write an exam, go on a first date, try river rafting or have an argument with a friend. Your body's response to the anxiety helps you handle these events.

So what's bad about anxiety? If your anxiety is too intense or it lasts too long it may begin to interfere with your life. For example: if you constantly worry about things that are unlikely to happen then you may not have energy to spend time with your friends, enjoy your favorite activities or focus on your schoolwork.

Anxiety is more than just being "stressed out" and there are many types of anxiety disorders that can interfere with your daily activities and cause you to avoid certain situations. They can also cause panic attacks, which look and feel like a heart attack with shortness of breath, chest pain, dizziness, shakiness and sweating. They can be very frightening but they last only a short time and are not life-threatening.

Dealing with anxiety

If anxiety is not treated it can lead to more serious problems. There are many strategies that you can try.

Be honest with yourself and others

Bottling things up is likely to keep your anxiety level high. Talk about your worries with someone you trust. Work out a plan to face your fears. If you avoid uncomfortable situations the anxiety can grow even stronger.

Yoga...it's not just for old people

Yoga, meditation, breathing exercises and other relaxation techniques can help you to feel calm. You can practice this breathing exercise and use it when you begin to feel anxious. Find a comfortable position and close your eyes. Focus only on your breathing. Each time you breathe out, relax your body. Continue for a few minutes until you feel calm and relaxed.

A hermit is a lousy career choice

Reach out to the people who care about you. Get out and see your friends. Spend time with your family. These relationships can help you control your anxiety.

Drag your butt off the couch

It's a fact that exercise helps you feel good both physically and mentally. Walk the dog, shoot some hoops or strap on some roller blades.