

Wellness

REVIEW

Is Anxiety Getting the Better of You?

The Anxiety Monster

Feeling occasionally anxious is a normal response to modern life. However, for some people their anxiety is like a little monster living inside, who stirs up uncomfortable feelings when faced with simple everyday situations. If you or someone you know avoids social gatherings, work meetings or confrontations, due to anxiety, then don't ignore these feelings. It's time to get some help to tackle the anxiety monster.

Symptoms Can Be Physical AND Emotional

Symptoms of anxiety can be very unsettling. Your heart rate increases, your mind races and you can no longer think straight. Though everyone experiences anxiety a bit differently, there are some more common symptoms to look out for.

- Physical sensations:
 - o racing heart;
 - o hot flushes, sweating and skin clamminess;
 - o rapid breathing; and/or
 - o frequent gastrointestinal upsets.
- Emotional sensations:
 - o feelings of excess worry, panic, fear or guilt;
 - o obsessive thinking and behaviours; and/or
 - o feeling generally tense and wound up.

If you can relate to any of the above, speak with your healthcare Practitioner today – this doesn't have to be your everyday 'normal'.

Breaking the Cycle

Herbal medicine can be used to help reduce anxiety and nervousness; improving your emotional resilience:

Passion flower – decreases that sense of 'restlessness' and can help settle nervous stomachs. It increases the calming neurotransmitters (brain chemicals), such as GABA; soothing a racing mind, decreasing tension and irritability.

Zizyphus – widely used in Chinese herbal formulas for its anxiolytic (anxiety reducing) properties; zizyphus is considered cooling, calming and another herb that's effective for restlessness.

Siberian milkwort – a calming herb that is often included in formulas for sensitive people who find themselves feeling teary and weepy when they are stressed or anxious.

Bupleurum – useful for those experiencing stress and unrest due to excessive nervous energy.

An individualised herbal formula forms the foundation of the Stress Less Program that is available from your Practitioner. Speak with them today about which herbs are most suitable for you.

Daily Strategies to Support Yourself

The best things in life are free – well almost! Incorporate as many of the following resilience-building strategies as you can each day. These tips will lead to better overall wellbeing as well as helping you to manage stress and anxiety:

- Connect with friends – keeping in touch with people maintains your support network;
- Exercise (ideally outdoors) – regular exercise has been shown to improve mood and reduce feelings of stress;
- Choose healthy foods – consume protein at each meal and avoid refined and sugary foods. This can help balance your blood sugar levels, reducing mood imbalances and lessening anxiety;
- Avoid caffeine – stimulants such as caffeine can exacerbate anxiety; and
- Breathe! – if you start to feel panicky or anxious, focus on taking some slow, purposeful, deep breaths, helping you return to a state of calm. Meditation can also help to quieten your mind and instill calm.

Conquering the Monster

Everyone experiences fears and worries from time to time, however if anxiety becomes excessive and stops you from enjoying everyday life, then it's time to conquer the monster. Speak to your Practitioner about how the Stress Less Program can help you feel calmer, more positive and in control of your situation.



Talk to your Practitioner today about your journey to less worries!