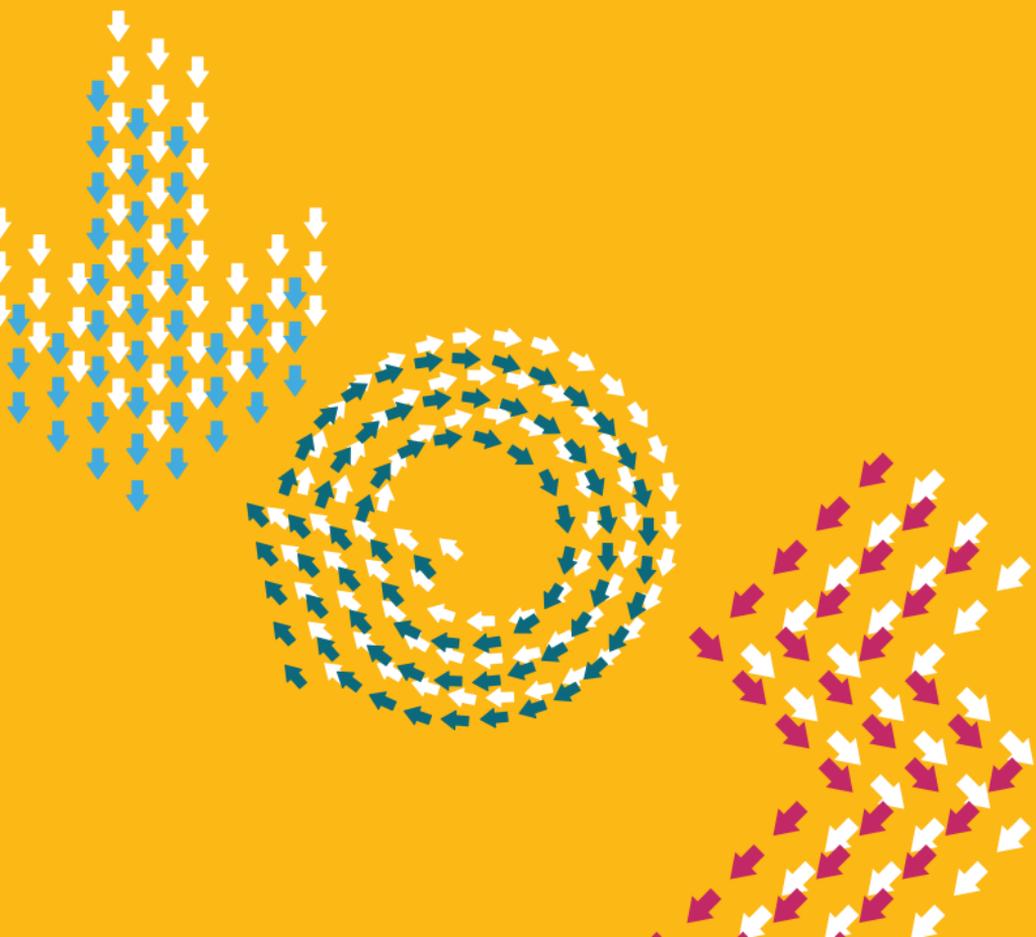


DEALING WITH  
**STRESS,**  
ANXIETY AND  
DEPRESSION



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# Stress is tension which builds up in the body and mind in response to something happening in our lives.

Some stress can be good for us, helping us to work harder and become more focused. After a difficulty passes, the feelings of stress usually fade. However if you are constantly stressed, your body and mind will stay on 'high alert' and you might develop symptoms which are hard to live with.

# Signs & symptoms

Stress can affect us in many different ways:



## EMOTIONALLY

Feeling irritable  
Feeling anxious  
Low self-esteem



## BEHAVIOURALLY

Drinking and  
smoking more  
Biting your nails  
Snapping at people



## MENTALLY

Worrying  
Loss of focus  
Finding it hard to  
make decisions



## PHYSICALLY

Headaches  
Aches and pains  
Dizziness  
Difficulty sleeping

# What causes stress?



Stress may be related to:

- ➔ A physical health condition
- ➔ A stressful job or unemployment
- ➔ Financial difficulties
- ➔ Family or relationship issues such as bereavement or divorce
- ➔ Living somewhere you don't feel safe
- ➔ New job or moving house

It's good to tackle the cause of stress as avoiding problems can make things worse. Sometimes, however, you cannot change the circumstances and instead will have to focus on looking after yourself through the stressful situation.

# How to tackle stress

There are lots of things you can do to manage stress better. You could:



**Do more exercise if you can**



**Take control of the stressful situation**



**Talk to friends and family**



**Make time for self-care**



**Avoid unhealthy habits eg. relying on alcohol or caffeine**

If none of these things are working,  
there are **organisations that can help:**

The NHS have online resources at **www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/understanding-stress/**

**Self-help courses** are available  
through **www.vitahealthgroup.co.uk/nhs-services/nhs-mental-health/bristol-north-somerset-south-gloucestershire/self-help-resources/**

**MindLine Bristol** are  
available from 7pm to 11pm  
on 0808 808 0330

**If you are struggling, see  
the back of this booklet  
for emergency numbers or  
contact your GP**



# Anxiety is a feeling of unease, such as worry or fear, that can be mild or severe.

It's normal to feel worried and anxious about sitting an exam, or having a job interview. However, some people **find it hard to control their worries**. Their feelings of anxiety affect them all the time in their daily lives.



People with anxiety **may feel worried or uneasy most days** and often struggle to remember the last time they felt relaxed. As soon as one anxious thought is resolved, another may appear about a different issue.

# Signs & symptoms

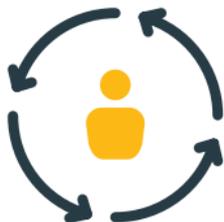
Anxiety can cause both mental and physical symptoms including:



**feeling restless  
or worried**



**having trouble  
concentrating or  
sleeping**



**dizziness**



**rapid heartbeat**

# What causes anxiety?

It's not always easy to know why people become anxious as it can be a combination of things, including:

- ➔ A chemical imbalance in the brain which affects moods;
- ➔ The genes you inherit from your parents;
- ➔ Stressful or traumatic experiences such as domestic violence, child abuse or bullying;
- ➔ Having a painful long-term health condition, such as arthritis;
- ➔ Drug or alcohol misuse.

**However, many people develop anxiety for no apparent reason.**

# Treating anxiety

Anxiety can have a significant effect on your daily life, **but there are many options available** that can ease your symptoms, including:



going on a  
self-help course



exercising  
regularly



stopping  
smoking



cutting down  
alcohol / caffeine

**Self-help courses** are available through [www.vitahealthgroup.co.uk/nhs-services/nhs-mental-health/bristol-north-somerset-south-gloUCEstershire/self-help-resources/](http://www.vitahealthgroup.co.uk/nhs-services/nhs-mental-health/bristol-north-somerset-south-gloUCEstershire/self-help-resources/)

There are also national and local services you can **call for support:**

**MindLine Bristol** are available from 7pm to 11pm on **0808 808 0330**

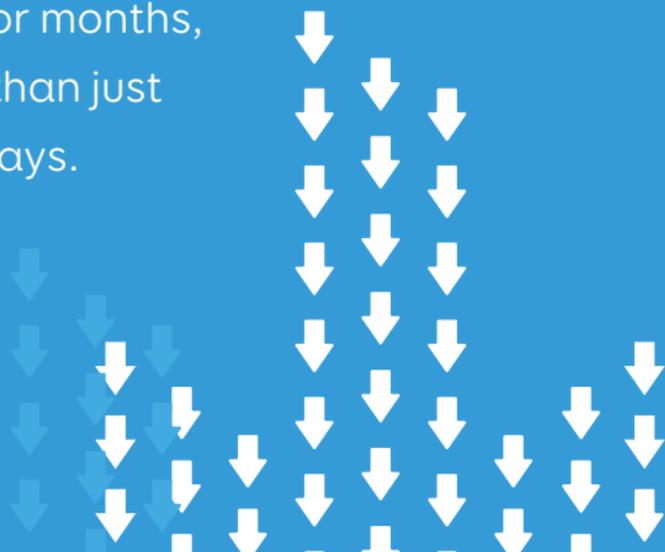
**Anxiety UK** are offering online support groups via Zoom calls, which you can book by emailing **support@anxietyuk.org.uk**

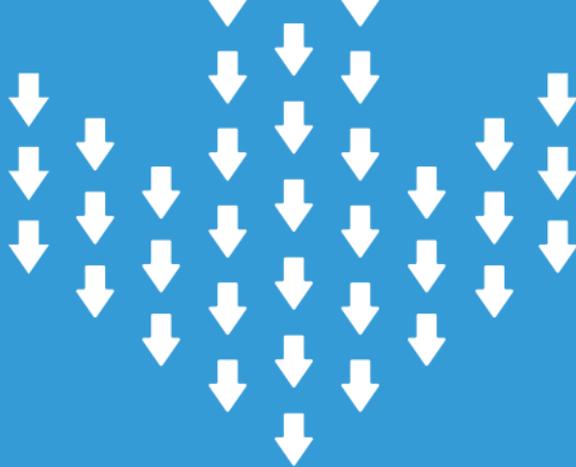
**No Panic Helpline** are available 10am to 10pm daily on **0844 967 4848**

**If you are struggling, see the back of this booklet for emergency numbers or contact your GP**

# Depression is a low mood which lasts for a long time and can be either mild or severe.

Most people go through times when they feel down but when you're depressed you feel unhappy for weeks or months, rather than just a few days.





Mild depression means you feel constantly low, while severe depression can make you feel that life is no longer worth living.

# Signs & symptoms

If you have depression you might feel sad and hopeless, lose interest in the things you used to enjoy and feel tearful. You might also:



**feel  
constantly  
tired**



**sleep  
badly**



**have aches  
and pains**



**have no  
appetite or  
sex drive**



**isolate  
yourself**

# What causes depression?

Sometimes life events can cause depression such as **bereavement, losing your job or even having a baby.**

People with a family history of depression **are more likely to have depression.** But you can also become depressed for no obvious reason.

Depression is fairly common and affects **all kinds of different people** regardless of gender, race or age.

# Treating depression

It is important to contact a doctor if you think you may have severe depression as you may need a course of **anti-depressants**, **talking therapy** such as cognitive behavioural therapy, or a referral to a **specialist mental health team**. If your depression is mild, you can try lifestyle changes such as **exercise**, **giving up smoking**, **eating healthily** or **self-help**.

If you are struggling, see the back of this booklet for emergency numbers or contact your GP



## How to **help yourself**:

**WellMind** is a free NHS app that can help you manage stress, anxiety and depression, just search WellMind in your app store.

**The Campaign Against Living Miserably** runs a helpline every day from 5pm to midnight, call on **0800 58 58 58**

**MindLine Bristol** are available from 7pm to 11pm on **0808 808 0330**

**Self-help courses** are available through [www.vitahealthgroup.co.uk/nhs-services/nhs-mental-health/bristol-north-somerset-south-gloucestershire/self-help-resources/](http://www.vitahealthgroup.co.uk/nhs-services/nhs-mental-health/bristol-north-somerset-south-gloucestershire/self-help-resources/)

# EMERGENCY NUMBERS

**In life-threatening emergencies, call  
999 immediately**

If someone is being seen by Bristol Mental Health services and is experiencing a mental health crisis, please call their local recovery team:

Central area **0117 955 6098**

South Bristol **01275 796200**

North Bristol **0117 323 5822**

Otherwise, you can call Bristol Mental Health 24/7 on **0300 555 0334** if they are having a mental health crisis.

If you need support call The Samaritans 24/7 on **0117 983 1000** or **116 123**, or email **jo@samaritans.org**

**Produced by Community Access Support  
Service in response to Covid-19**

**0117 304 1400 | [info@cassbristol.org](mailto:info@cassbristol.org)**

**[www.cassbristol.org](http://www.cassbristol.org)**

