



# Anxiety — You're Not Alone

Understanding anxiety, and the ways out

Recover • Rebalance • Revive



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PATIENT GUIDE

Dr Reguram Sandrasegaram • Young Street Medical & Dental Centre


**Common, draining — and very treatable.**  
Anxiety is one of the most common reasons people see their GP. It can feel exhausting and lonely — but it's also one of the most treatable mental health conditions, with several paths that genuinely work.


 **1 in 7**  
Australian adults experience anxiety in any year


 **1 in 4**  
will experience it at some point in life

 **Treatable**  
with therapy, lifestyle changes and (sometimes) medicine


## What anxiety actually is


 **It's your alarm system, stuck on**  
Anxiety is normal fear, switched on too often or too strongly. Your body thinks there's danger when there isn't.

 **It's not weakness**  
It runs in families, follows stressful times, and affects very capable people. It's a health issue, not a character one.

 **Body and mind together**  
Racing heart, tight chest, churning gut, restlessness, poor sleep, brain fog. These are real symptoms, not 'in your head'.

 **Worry that won't switch off**  
Persistent 'what if...' thoughts, planning for unlikely disasters, struggling to relax even when nothing's wrong.

 **Many shapes**  
Generalised worry, panic attacks, social anxiety, health anxiety, OCD — they overlap, and the same approaches often help all of them.

 **It often travels with low mood**  
Many people have both anxiety and depression at once. Treating one usually helps the other — we look at the whole picture.

**How treatment actually works**  
The strongest evidence is for CBT (cognitive behavioural therapy) — a short, practical talking therapy that retrains how your brain handles worry. Lifestyle, mindfulness and (for some) medication round out the approach. Most people improve.



# Steps That Help

What you can do, what we can do, and where to turn

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## Six things that genuinely help



### Move your body

Regular activity reduces anxiety as much as some medicines. Walking, yoga, swimming — anything you'll actually keep doing.



### Protect your sleep

Poor sleep ramps up anxiety; anxiety wrecks sleep. Steady sleep times and less screen time at night break the loop.



### Easier on stimulants

Caffeine and energy drinks can fuel anxiety; alcohol calms it briefly but rebounds badly. Cutting back often helps within days.



### Slow your breathing

Slow nasal breathing (out longer than in) calms the nervous system. A few minutes, several times a day, works better than once a week.



### Try CBT

The gold-standard talking therapy. Ask your GP about a Mental Health Treatment Plan — Medicare covers up to 10 sessions a year.



### Medicine, when it fits

Some people benefit from an antidepressant (often an SSRI). They're not addictive and work alongside therapy, not against it.



### Reach out today if:

- You're having thoughts of hurting yourself
- Anxiety is stopping you working, sleeping or eating
- Panic attacks are happening regularly
- Old strategies have stopped working



### Help available now:

- ✓ Lifeline — 13 11 14 (24/7 crisis)
- ✓ Beyond Blue — 1300 22 4636 (anxiety & depression)
- ✓ NewAccess — free 6-session mental health coaching
- ✓ Book a GP appointment for a Mental Health Treatment Plan

## You're not broken — and you're not alone

Anxiety is one of the most treatable conditions we manage in general practice.

*Coming in is the hardest step. We'll figure out the right path from there. — Dr Regu*