

Who Should Use This Guide?

Anxiety is a reaction to stress, which is typically normal in most people. Sometimes anxiety can become overwhelming and begin to affect an individual’s daily activities. When this occurs, it may be beneficial to seek help.

Tips for Parents.

Stress Management

Stress is something that everyone experiences every day. It is important to know how to cope with stress so that it does not impact your life in a negative way. Here are several strategies to try to better manage your stress in a positive way.

- Identify stressful events
 - Write down what has caused your stress, how your body reacted, what thoughts you had in response, and what you did, if anything, that made you feel better.
- Reduce unhealthy ways you are responding to stress
 - Try to eliminate unhealthy responses, such as eating or sleeping too much or too little, spending too much time in front of screens, withdrawing from people and activities, procrastinating, and avoiding stressful events.
- Ways to Cope
 - Know your limits and say “no” to things that are unnecessary.
 - Interact less with individuals who create stress in your life.
 - Accept the things you cannot control (e.g., people, the past).
 - Focus on the things you can control (e.g., your thoughts, behaviors, your environment).
 - Find the positive in things.
 - Think of creating timelines and lists to help with time management.
 - Find time to relax and do something you enjoy every day.
 - Interact with friends and others as much as possible.
 - Talk about your feelings with others.
 - Eat healthy.
 - Exercise regularly.
 - Create positive sleep habits.
 - Avoid caffeine, sugar, alcohol, drugs, and cigarettes.

(Adapted from Smith, M & Segal, R. (2014). *Helpguide*. Stress Management.)

Symptoms of Anxiety

- Anxiety symptoms look different in each person. Some people have several symptoms and some have just a few. Here are some common symptoms you may experience:
 - Excessive worry
 - Sleep problems
 - Irrational fears
 - Psychosomatic problems (e.g., stomachaches, headaches)
 - Compulsive or repetitive thoughts or behaviors
 - Chronic irritability
 - Muscle Tension
 - Difficulty concentrating
 - Restlessness
 - Breathing problems

Treatment

- Research supports the use of either Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy, certain medications, or both.
 - Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy is a goal-oriented method that assists in changing negative thinking patterns and reactions into more appropriate and/or positive thoughts and behaviors. Typically, this approach is accompanied by homework for the individual to practice regularly at home.
 - Talk to your pediatrician or make an appointment with a psychiatrist to discuss possible medications for anxiety.

Books & Web Sites

Anxiety and Depression Association of America (www.adaa.org)

National Institute of Mental Health (<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/anxiety-disorders/index.shtml>)

Local Resources

Daily Behavioral Health, 14538 Grapeland Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44111, 216-252-1399,
www.dailybh.com Offices in West Cleveland and Avon

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