

- **Try to eat well.** When you don't feel well or don't have a lot of energy, it's easy to reach for options that aren't very healthy. The physical sensations of anxiety can make it hard to eat as well. Watch out for too much caffeine and aim for good nutrition to keep you fueled throughout the day. Talk to your doctor or counsellor if you have a hard time building a healthy relationship with food.
- **Try to find healthy ways to relax.** Learning how to turn down the volume of anxious thoughts or feelings—just for a short time—is a huge part of managing anxiety. It might sound impossible if you're very anxious right now, but with a little effort and practice it's a realistic goal for everyone. You can try listening to music, watching a funny video, going for a walk outside, practicing your faith, or whatever helps you. There are apps and websites to help you try relaxation skills like meditation and mindfulness, such as [www.keltymentalhealth.ca/breathr](http://www.keltymentalhealth.ca/breathr) and [www.headspace.com](http://www.headspace.com). See [www.heretohelp.bc.ca/wellness-modules](http://www.heretohelp.bc.ca/wellness-modules) for more tips on mindfulness and stress management.
- **Be mindful of alcohol or other drug use.** While they might seem like a quick fix, substances like alcohol and other drugs can make anxiety worse or harder to manage in the long run. If you're having a hard time managing your alcohol or drug use, talk with your doctor or other mental health professional. You can find a workbook to help you think about your relationship with substances at [www.heretohelp.bc.ca/factsheet/you-and-substance-use](http://www.heretohelp.bc.ca/factsheet/you-and-substance-use).

## LEARN MORE

**HeretoHelp**—visit [www.heretohelp.bc.ca](http://www.heretohelp.bc.ca) for information, screening self-tests and personal stories about anxiety. You'll also find Managing a Mental Illness, a series that guides you from diagnosis to recovery, and Wellness Modules, which offer self-care tips and strategies. You'll also learn about a HeretoHelp initiative called Healthy Minds | Healthy Campuses, a growing community aimed at improving mental health on BC campuses. See [www.healthycampuses.ca](http://www.healthycampuses.ca).

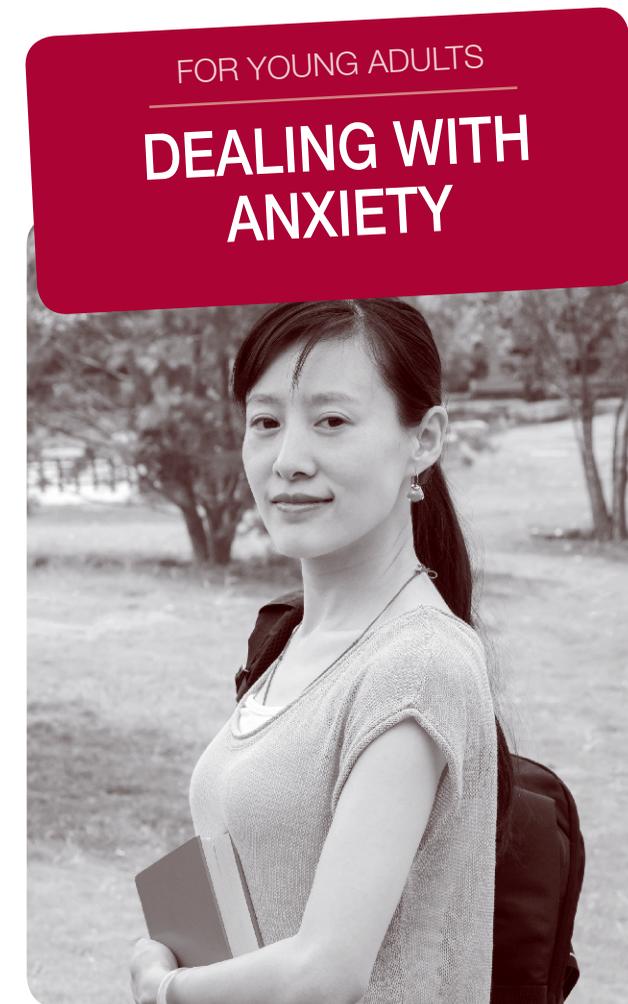
**AnxietyBC**—visit [www.anxietybc.com](http://www.anxietybc.com) for information on anxiety and anxiety disorders and self-help resources to help you manage anxiety at home. Their free app, MindShift, can help you learn more helpful ways to think and helpful ways to relax. Look for tools to help with text anxiety, performance anxiety, perfectionism, and conflict.

**Mindcheck**—visit [www.mindcheck.ca](http://www.mindcheck.ca) for information about mental health, resources, and support. You can take a quiz to check your mood, and their self-care resources include several apps and websites you can try on your own.

**Canadian Mental Health Association**—visit [www.cmha.bc.ca](http://www.cmha.bc.ca) or call 1-800-555-8222 (toll-free in BC) or your local CMHA branch for information and community resources on mental health or any mental illness. A free program called Bounce Back helps adults experiencing mild to moderate depression, stress, or anxiety, using self-help materials and coaching. See [www.bouncebackbc.ca](http://www.bouncebackbc.ca).

## WANT MORE INFO ON ANXIETY?

This brochure is part of a series on young adults and anxiety. To learn more about anxiety and what it might look like, see *Learn about Anxiety: For Young Adults* at [www.heretohelp.bc.ca/for-young-adults](http://www.heretohelp.bc.ca/for-young-adults).



**Canadian Mental Health Association**  
British Columbia  
*Mental health for all*

The Canadian Mental Health Association, BC Division is proud to be affiliated with HeretoHelp. HeretoHelp is a project of the BC Partners for Mental Health and Addictions Information, a group of non-profit agencies providing good-quality information to help individuals and families maintain or improve their mental well-being. The BC Partners are funded by BC Mental Health and Substance Use Services, an agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority.



**Canadian Mental Health Association**  
British Columbia  
*Mental health for all*



in partnership with

**heretohelp**  
Mental health and substance use  
information you can trust

If anxiety is bothering you, there are steps you can take

## GET HELP

Asking for help is not always easy, but it's the first step towards feeling better. Remember that you don't have to have all the answers when you ask for help. You just need to know that something doesn't seem right and you want to know what's going on. Here are some important people you can talk to:

### Parents, caregivers, others you trust

Talking with family or trusted friends can be very hard! However, other people can be a great source of support, and they may be able to help you reach out to other health professionals. When you're ready to talk, plan what you want to say in advance, especially if you feel very nervous about the conversation.

### Your doctor

Your doctor may be able to treat you on their own. If not, your doctor will help you see a mental health specialist like a psychiatrist. It's important to see a doctor if you're concerned about your mental health because some physical health problems may look like mental health problems, and your doctor will look at all possible causes.

A lot of people feel nervous when they talk with their doctor. You can find tips to help you prepare for your appointment and work with your doctor or any other mental health professional at [www.heretohelp.bc.ca/working-with-your-doctor](http://www.heretohelp.bc.ca/working-with-your-doctor).

### Your campus

If you're in post-secondary education, many campuses offer services such as sessions with a counsellor and support groups. If a mental illness like an anxiety disorder affects your ability to do well at school, you may be eligible for extra support.

### Your workplace

If you're working, some workplaces offer a service called an Employee (Family) Assistance Plan (EAP/EFAP), which offer confidential counselling. Talk to your human resources contact at work about access, or talk to your parent or guardian to see if you're eligible for free counselling under their benefits.

## FEEL BETTER

Anxiety disorders are very treatable and you should expect to feel better again. The exact treatment will depend your own situation. In general, treatment will include some combination of the following:

### Counselling

Counselling or "talk therapy" help you understand your anxiety and learn skills to manage anxiety problems. A type of therapy called cognitive-behavioural therapy or CBT is a common and effective type of therapy, and it may be just as effective as medicine for less serious anxiety problems.

### Medication

Your doctor may prescribe medication if your anxiety problem is more serious or isn't improving with other treatments. The most common medications are antidepressants and anti-anxiety medications. Antidepressants are taken regularly to reduce symptoms

## IF YOU NEED TO TALK WITH SOMEONE RIGHT AWAY

For free help by trained distress line workers:

- BC Mental Health Support line at 310-6789 (no area code needed)—available 24/7
- Youth in BC at [youthinbc.com](http://youthinbc.com)—if you're under 30, chat live online—available noon to 1am Pacific Time
- Youth Space at [youthspace.ca](http://youthspace.ca)—if you're under 30, talk to someone via text message—available 24/7

over time. Anti-anxiety medicine quickly lowers some symptoms for a short period of time but are usually meant to be used only occasionally, when you really need extra help. It's important to talk with your doctor about what to expect and follow their instructions as closely as possible. Be sure to tell your doctor about any herbal or alternative treatments you are using, too.



Anxiety disorders are very treatable and you should expect to feel better again.

### Support from others

Anxiety problems can make you feel like you're all alone. Support groups are a great way to meet others and see what works for them. Talk to your doctor/counsellor for suggestions, or contact one of the organizations listed in the Learn More section. If you can't find a support group in your community, you can also find support online. A lot of campuses are also starting mental health clubs.

### Self-care at home

Self-care is exactly what it sounds like: little things you can do every day to take care of yourself. Self-care doesn't have to be big or complicated to make a difference. We have some suggestions listed below. You can also talk to your doctor or other mental health professional for more ideas.

- **Try to get enough sleep every night.** It's hard to feel good when you're tired! You can find tips to get a good night's sleep at [www.heretohelp.bc.ca/wellness-modules](http://www.heretohelp.bc.ca/wellness-modules). If you often can't sleep well, talk to your doctor or mental health professional. Sleep problems are a common concern for people who experience a lot of anxiety, so it's important to build good sleep habits.
- **Try to be active every day—especially if you don't feel like it!** Many people find that physical activity helps them cope with anxiety and boosts their mood at the same time. Even a short walk every day can make a big difference.