

# TIP SHEET.

## Anxiety.

On average, one in four people will experience a significant problem with anxiety at some stage in their life; and in any one year, over two million Australians experience anxiety conditions.

Everyone has experienced symptoms of anxiety at some point in time, with anxiety being a normal response to situations that we see as threatening or unfamiliar.

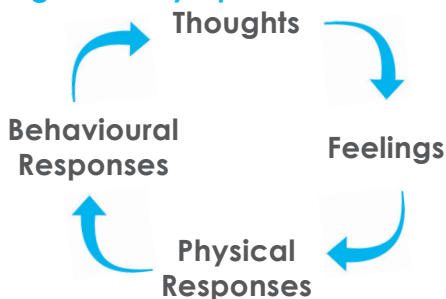
### When is anxiety helpful?

Anxiety at certain levels can be helpful, and can improve performance. Some examples include preparing for a public speech or an exam, signalling danger or coping with an emergency.

### When is anxiety not helpful?

Anxiety can affect your ability to concentrate, sleep and carry out ordinary tasks at work, home or school. People with anxiety disorders often feel compelled to avoid stressful situations and in extreme cases avoid going out altogether. Physical symptoms are common, such as shortness of breath, a pounding heart and shaking hands are common. Anxiety can interfere with the enjoyment of life and disrupt work, relationships and self-perceptions.

### Signs and symptoms



**Thoughts:** "I'm losing control", "I can't cope", "What if...?"

**Feelings:** nervous, worried, frightened, detached, panicky

**Physical Responses:** feeling tense, shaking, body/muscle aches, nausea, heart palpitations, tightness in the chest

**Behavioural Responses:** inability to sit down and relax, increased alcohol use, eating more or less, snappy/irritable behaviour

### Where to seek support

**Psychologist** - A psychologist can assist you to gain insight into your signs and triggers and work with you to develop effective strategies to enable you to manage your symptoms effectively. As your EAP provider, you are welcome to contact us on 1300 277 924 for a confidential appointment with one of our psychologists.

**General Practitioner** - Your GP will discuss with you different treatment options which may include medication and/or a referral to a psychologist through a Mental Health Care Plan (MHCP). Seek as much information as you can from your doctor to assist you with implementing an appropriate plan for support.

**Other supports** - your close friends and family can play an important role in your recovery by providing support, understanding, and help.

**Self-help** – for preventative or self-help techniques, see our 'Anxiety: 10 strategies to try' tip sheet.