



CATHI

Caregiver's Answers, Topics, and Helpful Information

In an endeavor to continually assist caregivers in their search for pertinent information regarding eldercare, our Information and Referral Specialists address topics most frequently asked questions via **Caregiver's Answers, Topics, and Helpful Information (CATHI)**. Additionally, caregivers are invited to e-mail individual questions caregiver2@senior-resources-guilford.org and an Information and Referral Specialist will reply.

Dear CATHI,

Question: I get really uptight and feel like I don't know what to do or how to handle things. What could be the reason?

Answer: Everyone feels anxious sometimes. But if your worries and fears seem overwhelming, there are things you can do.

Let's start by trying to recognize the symptoms of anxiety. **Emotional symptoms** can include feeling tense, restless or irritable. They can also include obsessive thinking, trouble concentrating, feeling like your mind goes blank or maybe you have excessive worry, fear, panic or dread. These things may cause you to avoid things you associate with anxiety.

Physical symptoms might include sleep problems, short, shallow breathing, tightening of the chest, a rapid heartbeat, nausea or dizziness, sweating, trembling, or a headache.

Anxiety triggers differ from person to person. Common sources of anxiety include stress or trauma, major life events or changes, a family history of anxiety, illness or side effects of medication.

Do you know what triggers your anxiety? There can be more than one cause. Figuring out what causes it is an important step. Ask yourself, "What was I thinking about (or doing) just before I started to feel this way. Things like skipping meals, not getting enough sleep or spending too much time on social media can play a big role in anxiety.

These healthy coping tips may help you manage your anxiety.

- **Focus on things you can control.** Aim to do your best, not perfection. Work on time management skills.
- **Express your Feelings.** Talk to others, it can help you realize you are not alone. Keep a journal. Writing can relieve stress. Join a support group. You may learn new ways to cope.
- **Take care of your body.** Exercise. It releases chemicals in your brain that work to curb anxiety and boost your mood. Eat healthy foods and get enough sleep. Limit alcohol and caffeine. If you smoke, get help to quit. Try art, yoga, meditation or other mindfulness exercises.

When you feel anxious...Take a break. Give yourself a moment, take a few deep breaths and slow down. Practice positive self-talk. Actively distract yourself. Take a walk, read or work on a hobby.

Ask for help. If your anxious feelings are intense or do not go away, or are making day-to-day life hard, seek professional help. A counselor or doctor can explain treatment options that may help with your anxiety. Talk therapy, designed to help you understand and change certain thought and behavior patterns is common and effective treatment for anxiety. Medication, or a combination of medication and talk therapy may also be an option.

Everyone feels anxious sometimes. It is a normal reaction to stress but if you find yourself feeling anxious often, or that your anxious feelings start to interfere with your daily life and your ability to enjoy it, it's time to get help.

This article was adapted from the Journeyworks brochure titled Dealing with Anxiety by Wendy Mayer-Lochtefield

Note: This is for informational purposes only.

For referrals to community organizations in Guilford County that assist older adults and caregivers, contact Senior Resources of Guilford's SeniorLine at (336) 333-6981 in Greensboro and Guilford Co., in High Point/Jamestown (336) 884-6981 or the Caregiver Support Specialist, at (336) 373-4816 or (336) 883-3586 in High Point.



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