

The EAP
is a **free** service
for you and your
eligible family members.

All EAP services are
**completely
confidential.**

Don't Let Anxiety Control Your Life

Anxiety is familiar to everyone due to the many stresses and complexities of modern life. But about 25 percent of U.S. adults have a serious problem with anxiety at some time in their lives.

“Unlike fear, which is usually directed toward a concrete thing or event, such as a snarling dog or not meeting a deadline, anxiety is often nonspecific and can be brought on by worrying about the future, your finances or your health, in general,” says Edmund Bourne, Ph.D., author of *Coping With Anxiety*. “Anxiety can appear in different forms and at different levels of intensity, and can range in severity from a mere twinge of uneasiness to a full-blown panic attack.”

The causes of anxiety are varied and include upsets in brain chemistry, heredity, childhood trauma, abuse, chronic stress, loss of a loved one and drug and alcohol abuse, to name a few.

“While it can be helpful to identify possible causes of anxiety and address them, you don’t need to know why you feel anxious to be helped by practicing coping strategies,” says Dr. Bourne.

Coping Strategies

The following practices are helpful for anyone with anxiety and may be all that’s needed if your anxiety level is mild and not disrupting your life.

People with more severe anxiety, including anyone dealing with panic or post-traumatic stress disorder, will still find the exercises helpful but also may need therapy and medication.



These exercises can be done singly or in any combination:

Take Calming Breaths

This exercise quickly interrupts the momentum of anxiety symptoms. Breathing from your abdomen, inhale through your nose slowly to a count of five. Pause and hold your breath to a count of five. Exhale slowly to a count of five. Take two normal breaths, then repeat the cycle for three to five minutes.

Stop Magnifying Problems

Exaggerating problems by making them seem bigger and more serious than they are can lead to anxiety. To combat this way of thinking, stop using words such as terrible, awful or horrendous in relation to events or situations in your life. Instead of saying to yourself, “It’s unbearable,” or “I can’t stand it,” try saying, “I can cope” and “I can deal with and survive this.”

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Everyday Ways to Activate Your Life



Moderately intense activities (activities during which you feel some exertion but can carry on a conversation comfortably during the activity), such as walking briskly from your parked car to the mall entrance and taking your dog for a quick jog after dinner, won't help you train for a sport. But they can help you achieve and maintain a healthful weight and improve your overall fitness level.

They can also help reduce your risk of cardiovascular disease and osteoporosis, put you in a better mood and improve your balance, coordination and agility.

You have dozens of opportunities each day to increase your activity. Here are 13 ways to help get you started.

Ways to Get Moving

- Pace when you're talking on the phone instead of staying put. Though this won't burn a lot of calories, getting out of your chair throughout the day can help improve your circulation.
- Deliver memos in person instead of having your assistant do it, sending them via interoffice mail or faxing them. Consider these excursions exercise breaks.
- Go window shopping or browsing in your spare time.
- Shopping is the ultimate easy walking workout. Wear athletic socks and walking shoes.
- Paint your house. You'll burn an average of 300 calories an hour and get a good upper-body workout.
- Clean your house vigorously. You can burn about 420 calories an hour cleaning floors, vacuuming carpets, washing windows and scrubbing tile.
- Do your own yard work and gardening. Hoeing burns about 360 calories an hour, the same as playing badminton. Cutting your lawn with a push mower burns about 420 calories an hour, on par with playing tennis. Trimming trees burns about 500 calories an hour, equivalent to swimming the crawl.
- Turn lunchtime into an exercise adventure. Don't eat at the company cafeteria or the same old place. Instead, discover new restaurants within walking distance from your workplace.
- Carry a basket instead of pushing a cart if you're getting just a few things at the supermarket. Consider it a free weight that keeps getting heavier. But switch the basket from hand to hand periodically to balance the effect on your upper-arm and shoulder muscles.
- Park your car in the garage and leave it there if you're going anywhere less than a mile away. Taking the hilliest route possible when you're walking will burn extra calories.
- Sign up for a corporate fitness challenge. Whether you walk or run, you'll have fun and feel a sense of accomplishment that can spur you to stay in shape long after the race is over.
- Limit sedentary activities during your leisure time. For example, turn off the television several nights a week. Without TV programs to distract you, you'll move around more than you would otherwise.
- Make exercise a hobby. There's nothing like getting involved in an activity to take the chore out of exercise. Whether it's salsa lessons or learning to play golf, you'll be working out without even knowing it. Dancing can burn as many calories as walking, swimming or riding a bike. Square dancers covered nearly five miles in one evening, one study found.
- Use the stairs. Each flight of stairs you climb burns 10 calories. That doesn't sound like much, but taking 10 flights a day for a year can result in a 10-pound weight loss.*

Summertime Safety & Travel

Practice Sun Safety, Whatever Your Age

You're never too old for the sun's rays to harm your skin. In fact, sun exposure is especially dangerous for aging skin, says Jerome Z. Litt, M.D., author of *Your Skin From A to Z*. "The skin is like a sponge and a bank. It soaks up all the rays and stores them forever," he says. "Because seniors' skin is so much thinner than younger people's skin, more rays are able to penetrate." So be sure to protect your skin from the sun's damaging rays:

- Avoid direct sunlight when it's strongest, between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- Wear protective clothing, such as broad-brimmed hats, long-sleeved shirts, long pants and sunglasses that filter out ultraviolet (UV) light.
- Use sunscreens with an SPF of 15 or higher. Apply it liberally to exposed areas, including bald areas of your scalp.
- Avoid sunlamps and tanning booths.

Stay Fit While Away

Be creative! Plenty of exercises require little to no equipment at all. Do pushups to work your upper body and core and get your heart rate elevated. Squats and lunges are a perfect workout for your legs and butt. You can tone your triceps by doing dips from a chair with feet on the floor. Jumping rope for 2 - 3 minutes is a great way to get your heart pumping.

You can also bring a resistance band for a quick workout to maintain your muscle. If you don't have a resistance band, try filling water bottles to mimic dumbbells. *

Sunscreen smarts

No matter what time of year, you should remember to put on sunscreen when you spend time outdoors. Here are tips from the Skin Cancer Foundation on getting the most from your sunscreen:

- Choose a sunscreen that will protect you against both UVA and UVB rays.
- Spread the sunscreen evenly on all skin that is exposed to the sun. Don't scrimp on how much sunscreen you use.
- Don't forget to apply sunscreen to your lips, ears, neck, hands, feet and scalp if your hair is thinning.
- Reapply sunscreen every two hours, or more frequently if you have been swimming, sweating or using a towel to dry off.

Eating Healthy While Traveling

1. Bring healthy, non-perishable snacks with you that you can keep close by at all times. Some examples of snacks you can bring are whole grain crackers, high fiber cereal, fig bars, granola mix, nuts, and dried fruit.
2. If you can pack a cooler with items, try cheese sticks, yogurt, hard boiled eggs, or lean meats.
3. Drink lots of water to fill you up and keep you hydrated.
4. Eat breakfast and don't skip meals. Eating regularly will prevent you from overeating later.
5. If you have the option to cook, try to substitute some homemade meals instead of eating out all the time. *

Your risk for melanoma, a deadly form of skin cancer, rises if you have fair skin or hair, a family history of melanoma, a history of severe, blistering sunburns in youth, more than 50 moles and a particular form of mole called dysplastic nevi.

Along with a yearly skin exam by your doctor, you should examine your skin every three months. Ask a friend or relative to check areas you can't see or reach.

"Look for any changes in the skin, such as spots that bleed, crust, itch or change in texture," Dr. Litt says. Other common warning signs: new growths, sores that don't heal, and changes in the size, shape or color of moles and birthmarks.

Skin cancer can occur anywhere, but it's most common in the places that have been exposed to the sun the most (such as the head, face, neck, arms, and hands). If you notice anything suspicious, visit your doctor. *

Healthy Restaurant Ideas

1. Order half portions or share a meal.
2. Opt for baked instead of fried foods.
3. Order a salad with the dressing on the side.
4. Order sandwiches without sauces and dressings.
5. Skip the bread and butter basket or chips and order a side salad to have while you are waiting for your meal.
6. If you have to stop at a drive-thru, try to order your hamburger without cheese, skip the condiments, choose grilled meats instead of fried and opt for a salad instead of fries or chips. *

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Stop Worrisome Thoughts

Use this strategy if you find yourself stuck in a spiral of worrisome thoughts that won't go away. "If you're alone and want to halt a chain of anxious thoughts, shout in a loud and forceful manner, 'Stop!' or 'Stop it!'" says Dr. Bourne. "If you're with other people, shout internally as you visualize a large stop sign." Every time the worrisome thoughts return, repeat the spoken or internal command to yourself.

Shift Your Point of View

When anxiety or worry about an actual or possible problem is getting

the best of you, try thinking about the situation in the following ways:

- Tell yourself you can lighten up about it.
- Affirm "this too shall pass."
- Realize it's not likely to be as bad as your worst thoughts about it.

Combat Negative Self-Talk

Positive affirmations can help you cope with anxiety in the moment and over the long-term by helping you change long-standing beliefs, which tend to enable anxiety. To make your thoughts more constructive and supportive, replace or refute each negative statement illustrated below in italics with the one that follows it. For example, replace "This is

unbearable" with "I can learn to cope with this." Or, replace "What if this goes on without stopping?" with "I'll deal with this one day at a time."

"Resisting or fighting anxiety is likely to make it worse," says Dr. Bourne. "A more constructive approach is to cultivate an attitude that says, 'OK, here it is again. I can handle this. I've done it before.' In most cases, anxiety peaks and begins to subside in a few minutes. It will pass more quickly if you practice coping strategies regularly when you start to feel anxious." *

Krames Staywell

How to Use Your EAP

When help is needed call 1-800-433-2320. The office coordinator will ask for your name, employer and a brief description of your presenting concern. If an emergency exists you will be given immediate assistance. If your situation is not an emergency, you will be offered telephone assistance and/or in-person sessions to complete an assessment and make a referral for treatment if needed.

Meetings with your counselor are completely confidential. Your employer will not know you have used the EAP. No one will be provided any information about you without your written consent. Exceptions would occur only in the event of you being considered dangerous to yourself or someone else.

At the first appointment you should be prepared to give the counselor some background information to assist in formulating an action plan. Many people find it helpful to prepare a list of things they wish to discuss at each session.

PORTLAND:
503-639-3009

SALEM:
503-588-0777

If you live outside the Portland/Willamette Valley areas, call the toll free number listed below. You will be referred to a mental health provider in your area.

1-800-433-2320
www.cascadecenter.com



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