

CARERS WHO HAVE AN ANXIETY DISORDER



While caring for a family member or friend who has a disability or illness can be a rewarding and positive experience, the ongoing stress can lead to the development of an anxiety disorder.

When a caring role continues for many years, or is relentless and demanding, or when the role is physically or emotionally challenging, the stresses can result in an anxiety disorder.

Symptoms may include:

- feeling worried all the time
- difficulty concentrating
- restlessness
- fatigue
- irritability
- difficulty sleeping

Most people will experience anxiety symptoms at different times of their life, but if these symptoms are ongoing and begin to interfere with daily activities, it is important to seek medical help.

Anxiety affects one in seven (14%) people, and is the most common class of mental disorder in this country.¹

Too often, carers are so busy caring for someone else that they neglect their own needs. But the sooner you seek medical attention, the sooner you can start a treatment plan towards better health. This can then lead to better resilience and capacity to cope with the demands of caring.

GET HELP

Talk to your GP for an assessment of your symptoms. Your GP will be able to confirm a diagnosis and help you to explore the supports and treatments that are available.

Types of treatment include psychological interventions ('talking' therapies, counselling), medical interventions and complementary therapies (relaxation, breathing, yoga).

GET INFORMED

It can be frustrating not understanding the symptoms and treatments.

Arming yourself with information will help you feel more in control and confident about the treatments being offered. For information about anxiety disorders, visit www.beyondblue.org.au or phone 1300 224 636.

For information and resources about mental health services visit www.mindhealthconnect.org.au

SUPPORT FOR YOU AS A CARER

While caring can bring many positive rewards, over time it can also have a negative impact on the carer's physical health. It can be exhausting, unpredictable, frustrating and at times heartbreaking.

It is important to know that you are not alone and that help is available.

Caring can feel almost impossible if you are experiencing your own health issues.

It is important to know that you are not alone and that help is available.

To help you last the distance, make sure you access all the support that is available to you.

Contact the **Carer Advisory Line 1800 514 845** for advice and information about practical, financial and emotional supports that are available to you as a carer.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

See our flyer 'Caring For Someone Who Has An Anxiety Disorder'.

1. Slade, T et al. (2009) *The Mental Health of Australians 2. Report on the 2007 National Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing*. Department of Health and Ageing, Canberra.