



Q1 PRESS HIGHLIGHTS

1/01/20 – 01/04/20

Story from HEALTH >

I Hate The Word 'Hypochondriac' But Living With Health Anxiety Is Crippling

ALICIA LANSOM

Nicky Lidbetter, CEO of [Anxiety UK](#), explains: "The internet now holds a vast array of information; this could help to explain the rise in health anxiety as people with this condition have access to this information at all times. This information often gives the worst-case scenario for the symptoms provided and therefore reinforces the cycle of health anxiety and increases the physical and psychological symptoms of their anxiety.

— “ —

When it comes to the public perception of health anxiety, I wish people knew that this is a crippling mental illness. It's not an attention-seeking strategy.

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The anxiety trap: Expert offers practicable advice on how to cope when overwhelmed by angst

by Tracey Bryce

March 5, 2020, 12:02 am



One in 10 of us in the UK will experience an anxiety disorder at some point in our lives – that's eight million people

‘Professor Chris Williams, clinical advisor for Anxiety UK, said: “Anxiety is a normal reaction we all have to threat. “It is designed to help us survive and respond quickly to urgent threats. At times, it can be helpful and life-saving when, for example, crossing a road and hearing a car sound its horn at us.

“However if the anxiety is triggered at times when it’s not needed, it can become an anxiety disorder.”’



MENTAL HEALTH

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Mental health charity Anxiety UK, for example, offers an acupuncture service to its members.

“While the number of people who accessed this service to date is small, the results have been positive,” said Nicky Lidbetter, CEO of Anxiety UK. He added: “We know anecdotally that many people find complementary therapies used to support conventional care can provide enormous benefit, although it should be remembered they are used in addition and not instead of seeking medical advice from a doctor.”

Coronavirus: 'My anxiety feels like it has got proof that it's not safe outside'

The World Health Organisation says the coronavirus is generating stress, as people report struggling with increased anxiety.

By Alice Udale-Smith, news reporter

🕒 Thursday 12 March 2020 16:07, UK

COVID-19

Anxiety UK and Mind are just two of the charities offering support to people suffering mentally because of COVID-19.

Both recommend limiting news access and taking practical steps to help reduce anxiety such as breathing exercises and preparing a checklist of everything you'd need if you had to self-isolate for two weeks.

They also both run helplines for anyone struggling to cope. You can contact the [Anxiety UK](#) helpline on 03444 775 774 and the [Mind](#) helpline on 0300 123 3393.

Coronavirus: How to protect your mental health

By Kirstie Brewer
BBC News

As Anxiety UK's Nicky Lidbetter explains, the fear of being out of control and unable to tolerate uncertainty are common characteristics of many anxiety disorders. So it's understandable that many individuals with pre-existing anxiety are facing challenges at the moment.

Avoid burnout

With weeks and months of the coronavirus pandemic ahead, it is important to have down time. Mind recommends continuing to access nature and sunlight wherever possible. Do exercise, eat well and stay hydrated.

AnxietyUK suggests practising the "Apple" technique to deal with anxiety and worries.

- **Acknowledge:** Notice and acknowledge the uncertainty as it comes to mind.
- **Pause:** Don't react as you normally do. Don't react at all. Pause and breathe.
- **Pull back:** Tell yourself this is just the worry talking, and this apparent need for certainty is not helpful and not necessary. It is only a thought or feeling. Don't believe everything you think. Thoughts are not statements or facts.
- **Let go:** Let go of the thought or feeling. It will pass. You don't have to respond to them. You might imagine them floating away in a bubble or cloud.
- **Explore:** Explore the present moment, because right now, in this moment, all is well. Notice your breathing and the sensations of your breathing. Notice the ground beneath you. Look around and notice what you see, what you hear, what you can touch, what you can smell. Right now. Then shift your focus of attention to something else - on what you need to do, on what you were doing before you noticed the worry, or do something else - mindfully with your full attention.

Coping with coronavirus anxiety

Anxiety UK have experienced a big rise in callers since the outbreak of coronavirus.

David Smithson, the charity's operations director, gives his advice on how to deal with anxiety during this difficult time.

And we hear from three women with pre-existing anxiety disorders about why coronavirus has been especially challenging, and the strategies they have been using to cope.

🕒 26 Mar 2020



Press Links

Refinery 29

[Health Anxiety Symptoms](#)

Sunday Post

[Practicable advice on how to cope when overwhelmed by angst](#)

Glamour

[Compulsive skin picking excoriation disorder symptoms](#)

Sky News

[Coronavirus: My Anxiety feels like it has got proof that it's not safe outside](#)

BBC News

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[Coping with Coronavirus Anxiety](#)

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