

## Dealing with physical tension

Finding and dedicating time to relax is essential - give relaxation some of your time, not just what's left over.

Incorporate relaxing activities into your lifestyle. Do not rush tasks or try too hard to resolve issues.

Adopt a relaxation routine - it will become easier with practice.

Relaxation routines are available, such as audio recordings, which help to relieve muscle tension and teach appropriate breathing exercises.

Try not to worry about tension symptoms, such as aches, stiffness, increased heart rate, sweating, stomach churning, etc.

Keep fit and try adhering to a physical exercise regime. Regular brisk walks or swimming can help to relieve tension.

## Dealing with worry

Accept that worrying is normal and on occasion it may be useful.

Write down your concerns and use a rating system, such as marks out of 10, to decide which ones are more important.

Work out a plan of action for each problem.

Share your worries with friends, relatives, or your GP, as they may provide helpful advice.

Mentally repeating a comforting phrase may help to block out worrying thoughts.

Similarly, reading, crosswords, hobbies and interests may all help to keep your mind active and positive.

Enjoy quiet moments, such as sitting and listening to relaxing music. Allow your mind to wander and try to picture yourself in pleasant situations.

## Dealing with difficult situations

Build your confidence by accepting and confronting situations that make you feel anxious.

Adopt a step-by-step approach to help face things and places which make you feel tense. Regular practice will help you to overcome these issues.

Write a plan and decide how you are going to deal with difficult situations.

For further encouragement, reward yourself and share with others when you overcome difficult situations.

As you face difficult situations your confidence will grow and your anxiety symptoms should become less troublesome.

Everyone has good and bad days. Expect more good days as time goes on.

Try to write a plan containing all the elements presented in this guide that meet the needs of your particular situation. Remember that expert guidance and advice is available if you need further help.

The NHS has published resources on stress, anxiety, and depression on the NHS Choices website. Visit [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk) and search for Moodzone. The Moodzone website offers practical, useful information, interactive tools, and videos to support you on your way to feeling better.