

Six tips to help manage anxiety

Feeling anxious is natural when you are in a new and uncertain situation.¹

You may feel anxious or frightened about whether your treatment for your advanced breast cancer (aBC), also known as metastatic breast cancer (mBC) will work, and

what will happen in the future. You may be worried about any aches or pains you feel. If your anxiety persists or gets worse, speak to your **GP**, **specialist nurse** or a **psychologist/counsellor**, who will help you to find ways of coping. In the meantime, try these **6 tips to help manage anxiety**.^{1,2}



Focus on what you can control

- You may want to find out more about the cancer, your treatment options, and how to manage any side effects.¹
- Gaining knowledge and understanding can help answer your questions and may ease some anxiety.¹
- To find out more about aBC, also known as mBC, treatment and living with cancer you can visit **Macmillan Cancer Support** and **Breast Cancer Now**, by following the links at the end of this guide.



Talk

- If you feel like talking, don't be afraid to talk to the people close to you.^{1,2}
- Talk to someone who is a good listener. You could talk to a friend, a partner or family member.¹
- Choose someone you trust a lot and let them be a listening ear.²
- If you don't choose to talk to someone you know, speak to your **GP**, **specialist nurse**, or **psychologist/counsellor** – they are there to help you.
- You may also find it helpful to contact **Macmillan Cancer Support** or **Breast Cancer Now** – links to these websites can be found below.



Concentrate on your breathing

- Deliberately expanding your abdominal wall when you breathe can help you to relax, as it expands your lungs fully and makes you concentrate on something.³
- Put your hands on your stomach and feel them be pushed out as you breathe in deeply and slowly through your nose.³
- Sometimes if you are very anxious, you might forget to breathe out. Make sure you take enough time to breathe out fully before your next breath in.³
- Breathe out slowly and deeply from your mouth in a controlled way.³
- For more information about breathing exercises, visit the **Macmillan Cancer Support** website.



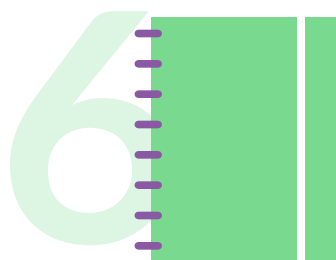
Do things that help you relax

- Putting on some music that you like and closing your eyes can help you feel calmer.^{1,2}
- Activities like meditation, yoga, massage or reflexology may also help you to relax and manage your anxiety.^{1,2}
- For more information on complementary therapies that can help you to relax and live well with cancer, visit the **Macmillan Cancer Support** and **Breast Cancer Now** websites.



Take some exercise

- Doing some sort of physical activity, such as a short walk, can help with anxiety.¹ It's a great way to help control the intensity of some of your feelings.²
- Chemicals in the body called **endorphins** are increased when we exercise, and these play a part in making us feel happy. If you don't do any exercise at all, you may have low levels of endorphins and a low mood.²
- If your cancer is making you feel poorly, you shouldn't push yourself too hard. You should listen to your body, but do try and do something physical, even if it's just something gentle² like gardening or a walk.



Keep a diary

- Keeping a diary of what makes you anxious can help you to avoid those situations and keep your anxiety down.¹
- Even if you don't like to write down how you are feeling, you may find it helps you to understand your feelings better, and it can be a release to get your thoughts onto paper instead of bottling them up inside.²
- Even if you just write a few words each day, it can be helpful. It can also help if you read back over what you wrote a few weeks or months ago so you can see that you are making progress.²

Visit these websites for advice on making decisions about work, taking time off and information on financial and emotional support:



At Breast Cancer Now we're here for anyone affected by breast cancer. Our breast cancer nurses, expertly trained staff and volunteers, and award-winning information make sure you can get the support you need to help you live well with the physical and emotional impact of breast cancer.

For breast cancer care, support and information, call us free on **0808 800 6000** or visit www.breastcancernow.org



We're here to help everyone living with cancer live life as fully as they can, providing physical, financial and emotional support. So whatever cancer throws your way, we're right there with you.

For information, support or just someone to talk to, call **0808 808 0000** or visit www.macmillan.org.uk

▼ This medicine is subject to additional monitoring. This will allow quick identification of new safety information. You can help by reporting any side effects you may get. See yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk for how to report side effects.

Reporting of side effects

If you get any side effects, talk to your doctor, pharmacist or nurse. This includes any possible side effects not listed in the package leaflet. You can also report side effects directly via the Yellow Card Scheme at yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk.

By reporting side effects you can help provide more information on the safety of this medicine.

References

1. Macmillan Cancer Support. Anxiety. Available at: <https://www.macmillan.org.uk/cancer-information-and-support/impacts-of-cancer/anxiety> (Accessed November 2021).
2. Cancer Research UK. Managing your emotions. Available at: <https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/coping/emotionally/cancer-and-your-emotions/managing-your-emotions> (Accessed November 2021).
3. Cancer Research UK. Breathing and relaxation techniques. <https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/coping/physically/breathing-problems/treatment/breathing-relaxation-techniques> (Accessed November 2021).