

Mental Health Matters

CARP Halton features a Mental Health segment: Mental Health Matters. “Trust yourself. You’ve survived a lot, and you’ll survive whatever is coming.” — Robert Tew. Whether it is having the blues or being anxious or being in crisis. Let’s see what the Canadian Coalition for Seniors’ Mental Health (CCSMH) and Mayo Clinic have to say about anxiety:

Anxiety symptoms in older adults fall into three categories:

1. Thoughts (such as worries or going over the same thoughts again and again without action).
2. Behaviours (such as avoiding situations that make you anxious).
3. Physical sensations (the feelings in your body that come with anxiety, such as your heart pounding, feeling tense, nauseous, or restless).

Anxiety can be something you have lived with all your life, or it can be a new problem that develops in older age. In older adults, anxiety can sometimes get worse because of medications or health issues.

CCSMH

Lifestyle and home remedies

While most people with anxiety disorders need psychotherapy or medications to get anxiety under control, lifestyle changes also can make a difference. Here's what you can do:

- Keep physically active. Develop a routine so that you're physically active most days of the week. Exercise is a powerful stress reducer. It may improve your mood and help you stay healthy. Start out slowly and gradually increase the amount and intensity of your activities.
- Avoid alcohol and recreational drugs. These substances can cause or worsen anxiety. If you can't quit on your own, see your doctor or find a support group to help you.
- Quit smoking and cut back or quit drinking caffeinated beverages. Both nicotine and caffeine can worsen anxiety.
- Use stress management and relaxation techniques. Visualization techniques, meditation and yoga are examples of relaxation techniques that can ease anxiety.
- Make sleep a priority. Do what you can to make sure you're getting enough sleep to feel rested. If you aren't sleeping well, see your doctor.
- Eat healthy. Healthy eating — such as focusing on vegetables, fruits, whole grains and fish — may be linked to reduced anxiety, but more research is needed.

Mayo Clinic

