

Tips for Careworkers: Anxiety



What it is: Feeling anxious means a person feels scared or worried about something. This is normal, and usually goes away.

Anxiety is when these feelings don't go away.

Why it matters: Many older people experience anxiety. Anxiety can be more common when people have a serious illness or at the end of life.

In an older person anxiety can be difficult to see because it is often associated with loneliness, depression and/or dementia.

When a person experiences anxiety and depression together, their symptoms and outcomes are more severe.

What I need to know: Anxiety can create physical symptoms, and changed behaviours and thoughts. These responses affect a person's health and quality of life.

Do

Look out for and report to nursing/ supervisory staff, if a person:

- becomes unable to relax
- becomes bad tempered
- has trouble sleeping or concentrating
- feels very tired or very awake
- is short of breath.

Do

Gently ask the person 'Is there anything else troubling you?' or 'Is there anything you would like to talk about?' It can help a person to talk about things that worry them.

Do

Treat the person with respect. Help them to maintain their sense of dignity, purpose, and spiritual well-being.

Name:

My reflections:

What is anxiety?

What signs of anxiety should I report to the nurse or supervisor?

My notes:

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