

## 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.

**Name:**

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## My reflections:

What is anxiety?

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

## My notes:

See related palliAGED Practice  
Tip Sheets:  
Distress at the End of Life  
Pain Management  
People with Specific Needs

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