



The natural choice for you & your family....

Men's Mental Health

But many of us have trouble coping with the stresses, changes or difficulties that life can deliver; particularly men. And this can trigger anxiety and depression. Anxiety is characterised by an exaggerated fear response manifesting as increased heart rate, reduced cognition, irritability, muscle tension, lethargy and sleep disturbance. One in 10 men suffers from anxiety but this may be an underestimation due to hesitation in reporting by men. More studies are required to understand the barriers and the underlying causes including denial and avoidance.

Ages and stages

Older men are more likely to seek assistance when their mood is affected by poor sleep quality, with other anxiety-increasing factors (such as diagnosis of prostate issues) raising the scores 3-4% above the average population. Paternal perinatal depression (PPD) can occur in men transitioning into fatherhood stemming from feelings of self-blame, anxiety, lack of enjoyment as well as anger, irritability, and extreme tiredness. Some predictors of PPD include previous depression, low income and poor social support, as well as decreased marital adjustment and perceived low parenting ability.

Suicide

Suicide mortality statistics for men 20-34 years old was 29% from 1998-2011. This equates to an average of 385 men each year ending their own life. Young men, in particular, are at risk of suicide with 24% of deaths in young Australian men aged 15-24 years accounted for by suicide. Men who feel the need for self-reliance (those who are less inclined to ask for help or feel uncomfortable asking for help) are more prone to poorer mental and general health.

Support & Information

Online platforms are an avenue that men are open to using to search for assistance. They provide a place, often anonymous, to search for psychologists/counsellors and forums that can assist in sharing their experiences, enabling them to reinforce the positivity of seeking help.

- Mens Line Australia – www.mensline.org.au (online counselling and forum for men)
- Beyondblue – www.beyondblue.org.au (includes The Shed Online – an online support group for men)
- Dads in Distress – www.parentsbeyondbreakup.com (online support for separated fathers)
- SANE Australia – www.sane.org (support for people living with mental illness)
- QLife – [www.qlife.org.au](http://www qlife.org.au) (support for same sex couples)

Lifestyle and stress management

Relaxation is popular and effective for the management of stress and anxiety with the benefits of massage, thermotherapy and relaxation room therapy lasting up to 26 weeks after a 12-week treatment. Acupuncture may also be helpful in reducing general anxiety disorder, with short-term treatment showing promise. The mechanism of action is suggested to be stimulation of the opioid pathways for mood modulation, induced anxiolysis, increased release of serotonin and noradrenalin and the modulation of cortisol. The advent of mobile devices has improved access to mental health apps; some are being used in clinical trials and some self-help apps may benefit the individual. The following apps have been used in a randomised controlled trial and showed significant benefit in decreasing depression, aiding ability to cope and to be effective against severe anxiety disorders.

- Headspace – guided breathing, sleep, relaxation and focus
- Calm – high rated meditation and sleep stories
- MoodKit – a portable cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT)
- MoodPrism – checks in with the user daily and displays the mood(s) as a spectrum of colour
- MoodMission – asks the user questions then supplies a list of five different tasks, one of which is a mood mission for the day along with an explanation as to why it is beneficial. Missions are based on trialled data
- Sleepstream – sound therapy designed to aid power napping, induce sleep, aid relaxation and reduce anxiety

Because apps are mobile, they can be utilised on-the-go compared with programs that require a non-mobile platform. Apps can also be used in private which, for many, is a more appealing alternative. These apps are designed for use in one's own time, encouraging challenges, reflection and behaviour change.

Common mood-killers:

- excess alcohol (despite acute relaxation effects)
- smoking and other toxin/drug exposure
- uncontrolled blood sugar
- unhealthy diet (e.g. high sugar, low fibre, high in “bad” fat)
- sedentary lifestyle
- nutrient deficiencies (e.g. iron, zinc, folate, vitamin D, magnesium, good fats)
- lack of sleep
- certain medications (e.g. statins).

Please don't forget....it's OK to ask for help. ☺

For further support book an appointment today via www.everlasting-health.com.au

**some information sourced from Bioceuticals publications.*