



## Overcoming Problems with Anxiety

- **Recognize that stress and anxiety aren't permanent.** There are many scientifically proven ways to manage stress, even after a life-changing deployment.
- **Stop the anxiety spin cycle.** If you notice your mind starting to spin on worries or negative thoughts about your recovery, do what you can to stop it quickly. Come up with reassuring thoughts ahead of time like "I am safe now and so is my family" to combat anxiety.
- **Recognize the triggers.** Identify which people, places, or situations are more likely to make you feel stressed. Don't avoid them – that will just reinforce the message that they are dangerous. Prepare yourself by thinking how to manage your stress in advance.
- **Practice relaxation exercises.** Learn how to do slow breathing and progressive muscle relaxation, or use imagery to relax your body and mind.
- **Add structure to your daily life.** Slowly return to work or school. Look for opportunities to participate in the world around you, from volunteering to helping out around the house on a regular basis.
- **Schedule pleasant activities into your life.** Pleasant activities – no matter how big or small – will help you recover.





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- **Maintain healthy habits.**

Exercise can help you focus, increase your energy and stabilize your mood. Other helpful habits include: getting enough sleep and eating a healthy diet. Avoid alcohol, drugs and energy drinks.

- **Get support.**

Talk to people you trust – friends, family, buddies – and let them know how you're really doing. It will keep you from feeling isolated and it will give them a chance to help you out of your current state.

- **Seek professional help.**

There are excellent talk-therapy treatments for stress and anxiety. There are also medications available for anxiety. Make sure that your provider knows about your history of concussion before prescribing you any medications.



**Seek immediate help if you are thinking about hurting yourself or someone else.**

**While these thoughts frequently come with increased stress, they are not to be taken lightly. To talk about a personal problem, call the DCoE Outreach Center at 866-966-1020.**