Patient Information
C20

NHS Golden Jubilee

Anxiety and Implantable Cardiac Devices

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Version 1

About this leaflet

This purpose of this leaflet is to provide patients with information about anxiety and the symptoms it may make you feel.

What is anxiety?

Anxiety is a normal response to stress or something that is unknown and is something we can all experience from time to time. The body responses to anxiety are designed to help us, but symptoms of anxiety, whilst not dangerous, can be uncomfortable.

Symptoms of anxiety can effect:

The way you feel:

worried, scared, nervous, sense of dread



The way you think:

rushing thoughts, 'what ifs'



The way your body works:

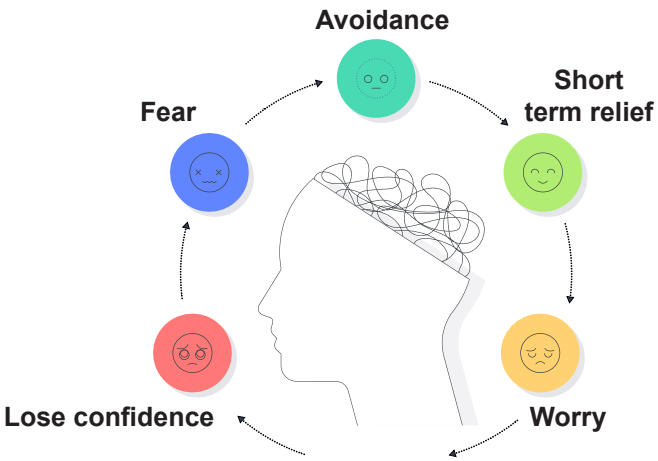
rapid heart rate, shortness of breath, sweating, dizziness, muscle tension



The way you behave:

Avoiding certain activities, checking, withdrawing socially. Symptoms of anxiety can be uncomfortable, particularly if we do not know that they are signs of anxiety. Sometimes people with anxiety symptoms worry that they may have something wrong with them.

This worry can create more anxiety symptoms, increasing the worry causing a cycle of anxiety.



How common is anxiety for people who have Implantable Cardiac Devices?

Experiencing anxiety related to your device is normal and most people find this reduces over time. Concerns about device function, potential shocks and lifestyle adjustments can contribute to increased levels of stress. Managing anxiety is important for heart health and quality of life.

What can I do to help manage anxiety related to my device?

There are a number of things you can do to help manage anxiety levels:

- Educate yourself about your device and its function to reduce uncertainty.
- Learn to recognise your individual symptoms of anxiety and your trigger points.
- Practicing relaxation techniques such as deep breathing, meditation or progressive muscle relaxation. The Daylight app is free for NHS patients in Scotland and provides guidance on these techniques.
- Engage in regular physical activity, as approved by your cardiology team.
- Connect with support groups to share experiences.
- Maintain communication with your doctor about any worries or symptoms you experience.

Download the Daylight app on your smart phone or scan the QR code to get started online.

What treatments are available?

There are a number of treatment options available to help manage anxiety levels, such as:



Computerised Cognitive Psychological Therapy (cCBT):
Online, self-directed cCBT helps manage anxious thoughts and behaviours. There is no waiting list for this and after being referred you can access it in your own time. There is also the option to include support from a psychologist alongside this so you can check in, discuss progress and ask questions.



Psychological therapy:
Psychological therapies have been shown to be effective in helping people overcome anxiety. These treatments are available through the West of Scotland Implantable Cardiac Device Psychology service. You can contact the service directly by telephone on 0141 951 5652 or email gjnh.psychology@gjnh.scot.nhs.uk.



Medication:
There are medications that can help reduce symptoms of anxiety. Speak to your GP about what options are available to you.



Urgent and out of hours support:
If you require help urgently out of hours, contact your GP in the first instance or call NHS24 on 111.



Breathing space:
Support is also available from Breathing Space, which provides a free, confidential telephone service for anyone in Scotland experiencing low mood, depression or anxiety. Telephone: 0800 83 85 87.

Notes

All of our publications are available in different languages, larger print, braille (English only), audio tape or another format of your choice.

我們所有的印刷品均有不同語言版本、大字體版本、盲文（僅有英文）、錄音帶版本或你想要的另外形式供選擇。

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reviewed for plain English

☎: 0141 951 5513