

# Emergency Department Discharge Advice

## Anxiety/Panic

### Have you?

Check how many times in the last 2 weeks you have felt the following?

How many days have you had these symptoms?	Not at all Score 0	2-3 days Score 1	4 - 7 days Score 2	Nearly every day Score 3
Felt nervous, anxious or on edge?				
Not being able to control or stop worrying?				
Worried about different things or one particular thing?				
Had trouble relaxing?				
Been so restless it was hard to keep still				
Became easily annoyed or irritated?				
Felt afraid that something awful might happen to you?				
<b>Total</b>				

If you have scored over 10, it is possible that you need further help with anxiety symptoms. If you are scoring more than 18 you should make an appointment to see your GP.

### Answer the following question

How difficult have these problems made it for you to do your work? Take care of things at home? Or get along with other people?

### Ready for some help?

This leaflet will guide you through some things that you can do to help yourself.

### Symptoms of anxiety/panic

These symptoms are frightening but the feelings usually fade after a few minutes.



The Information Standard Certified Member

Information

If you need this information in large print, easy read, on audiotape or in another language please call 0800 7838058 or e-mail [pals@dchft.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@dchft.nhs.uk)

If you wish to obtain a list of the sources used to develop this information leaflet please call 0800 7838058 or e-mail [patient.info@dchft.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.info@dchft.nhs.uk)

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Getting treatment can help you feel better and start to live your life normally again.

Panic attacks can happen unexpectedly, or in a particular situation.

The **symptoms** can be:

- Having **racing, pounding** or **skipping** heart
- Feeling **breathless**
- Having **chest pain**
- Getting a **dry mouth**
- **Sweating**
- Feeling **dizzy**
- Feeling **tingly or numb**
- Getting **chills or hot flushes**
- **Trembling or shaking**
- Feeling that what is happening **isn't real**
- Being **afraid** of certain situations or places
- **Overwhelming** fear

**It is important to seek help from a healthcare professional if you have any of these symptoms that last more than a few minutes. Any chest pain should be investigated by the Emergency Department.**

## **What steps should you take next?**

### **Step 1 – self help**

There is some advice below on some simple things you can do to help control your symptoms. Many people find books or internet resources useful to help understand the symptoms and to find ways to help improve them.

There are a large number of self-help books on anxiety and panic in your local library. It is important to find one that suits you. Try 'Over-coming Anxiety' by Helen Kennerly, published by Robinson, ISBN: 1854874225.

The NHS patient website has suggestions also  
<http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/>

### **Step 2 – contact the primary care team**

You can self-refer to the primary care mental health services in your local area. They offer workshops, self-help guides and can direct you to other useful organisations.

The numbers are:

West Dorset	01305 213067
Weymouth and Portland	01305 761501
North Dorset	01258 474520

## Step 3 – See your GP

See your GP if symptoms persist. You may need medication or referral to a mental health team.

## What can help whilst the symptoms are there/or take them away?

### Distraction techniques

- If you are **hyperventilating**, breathe into a paper bag and concentrate on bringing your breathing back under control
- **Activities** (exercise / hobbies / clean / computer games / walk)
- **Contribute** to someone (do a surprising, thoughtful thing for someone else / volunteer work)
- **Push** the thoughts away (leave the situation mentally, build an imaginary wall for yourself / block the situation / box it up)
- Other **thoughts** (count to 10 / crosswords / puzzles / guessing peoples occupations)
- **Sensations** (hold ice / squeeze a stress ball)

### Self soothe

Use any one of the five senses to spoil yourself:

- **Look** at a photo of a place you love
- **Listen** to your favourite music
- **Smell** your favourite scent
- **Taste** your favourite food
- **Touch** – have a bubble bath

### Pros and Cons

Make a list of the pros and cons of continuing with the distress.

Once you have started some self-help work you will start to recognise some unhelpful thoughts or triggers which you can begin to challenge.

### Helpful Resources

- Your local primary care Mental Health Service or GP as detailed on previous page
- Crisis response – 01305 361269
- Anxiety alliance – 0845 2967877
- Anxiety UK – 08444 775774
- First steps for freedom – 0845 1202916
- No panic – 0808 808545
- Mind information line – 0845 7660163
- Saneline – 0845 7678000
- Samaritans – 08457 90 90 90
- [www.moodjuice.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.moodjuice.scot.nhs.uk)