WHAT IS ANXIETY?
Anxiety is a feeling of unease, such as worry or fear, that can be mild or severe.

It’s normal to feel worried and anxious about sitting an exam, or having a job interview. However, some people find it hard to control their worries. Their feelings of anxiety affect them all the time in their daily lives.
People with anxiety may feel worried or uneasy most days and often struggle to remember the last time they felt relaxed. As soon as one anxious thought is resolved, another may appear about a different issue.
Signs & symptoms
Anxiety can cause both mental and physical symptoms including:

- feeling restless or worried
- having trouble concentrating or sleeping
- dizziness
- rapid heartbeat
What causes anxiety?

It’s not always easy to know why people become anxious as it can be a combination of things, including:

- A chemical imbalance in the brain which affects moods;
- The genes you inherit from your parents;
- Stressful or traumatic experiences such as domestic violence, child abuse or bullying;
- Having a painful long-term health condition, such as arthritis;
- Drug or alcohol misuse.

However, many people develop anxiety for no apparent reason.
Treating anxiety

Anxiety can have a significant effect on your daily life, but several different treatments are available that can ease your symptoms. These include:

**PSYCHOLOGICAL THERAPY**
- such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy

**MEDICATION**
- such as antidepressants
There are also many things **you can do yourself** to help reduce your anxiety, such as:

- **going on a self-help course**
- **exercising regularly**
- **stopping smoking**
- **cutting down alcohol / caffeine**

Some GPs in Bristol offer social prescribing for anxiety, which involves **access to art, exercise, cooking and other health-related programmes** at a location near you.
Local support

Bristol Mental Health
www.bristolmentalhealth.org

Bristol Wellbeing Therapies
0117 982 3209 | https://iapt-bristol.awp.nhs.uk

Bristol City Council Mental Health Links
www.bristol.gov.uk/social-care-health/mental-health-services

Samaritans
call 0117 983 1000 or text 07725 90 90 90

Community Access Support Service (CASS)
Works with community, equality and faith groups to improve access to mental health support.
0117 304 1400 | info@cassbristol.org
www.cassbristol.org

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