

# PRIOR MINDSET

## HEALTH ANXIETY SYMPTOMS AND TREATMENTS

**Overview:** Health anxiety is characterized by excessive worry about having or developing a serious illness, which can significantly impact daily life. It is often related to obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD).

**Signs of Health Anxiety:** You may have health anxiety if you:

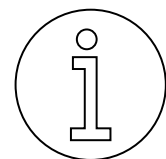


- Constantly worry about your health and well-being.
- Frequently check your body for signs of illness, such as lumps, tingling, or pain.
- Seek constant reassurance from others that you are not ill.
- Doubt the accuracy of medical tests or a doctor's diagnosis.
- Obsessively research health information online or in the media.
- Avoid topics related to serious illness, like medical TV shows.
- Act as if you are ill, such as avoiding physical activities.

Anxiety itself can also cause symptoms such as headaches or a racing heartbeat, which may be mistaken for signs of illness.

### Self-Help Strategies:

- Keep a Diary- track how often you check your body, seek reassurance, or look up health information.
- Aim to gradually reduce these behaviours over time.



- Challenge Your Thoughts
  - Create a table with two columns.
  - In the first column, list your health worries (e.g., "I'm worried about these headaches").
  - In the second column, write more balanced thoughts (e.g., "Headaches can often be a sign of stress").
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### **Stay Busy**

- Distract yourself from health worries by engaging in activities like walking or calling a friend.
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### **Return to Normal Activities**

- Gradually resume activities you've been avoiding due to health fears, such as sports or socialising.
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### **Practice Relaxation:**

- Use breathing exercises for stress management.
  - Visit resources like the Mind website for additional relaxation techniques.
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### **When to Seek Professional Help:**

- If your health anxiety is significantly impacting your daily life.
  - If self-help strategies are not effective.
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## Treatment Options:

- **Talking Therapies:** Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) is commonly used to treat health anxiety. It helps by changing negative thought patterns and behaviours.
- **Medication:** A GP may prescribe medication to manage anxiety symptoms.

You can refer yourself directly to an NHS talking therapies service without needing a GP referral.

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**For More Information** Visit **[WWW.PRIORMINDSET.COM](http://WWW.PRIORMINDSET.COM)** to book a free 15-minute CBT consultation and discover how I can help you manage and overcome your social phobia challenges.



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## References

Mind of the Matter. (2022, April 21). *Health anxiety: What is it? | Dr. Rachel White explains* [Video]. YouTube.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i1kyE01D9C0>



NHS. (2023). *Health anxiety*. National Health Service. Retrieved from  
<https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/conditions/health-anxiety/>

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## Free relaxation techniques audios found here:

Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust. (n.d.). *Relaxation techniques*. <https://www.cntw.nhs.uk/resource-library/relaxation-techniques/>

Find more information within the “Relaxation and Breathing Techniques PriorMindset information resource”

<https://web.ntw.nhs.uk/selfhelp/leaflets/Health%20Anxiety.pdf>