



Stress Management & Brain Health

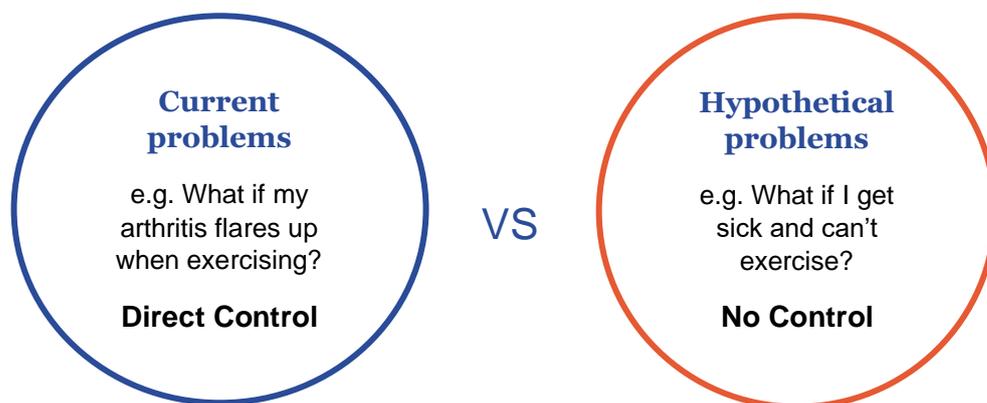
Anxiety is a normal and adaptive system in the body that tells us when we are in danger. Dealing with your anxiety NEVER involves eliminating it, but rather managing it.



The first step to **manage your anxiety** is to identify and name the anxiety.

Next, we need to understand that anxiety is often triggered whenever there is a situation that we are not 100% sure about. This can be both actual or perceived danger.

Types of worry/anxiety



What are some of your worries?

Try to think about the things you often worry about and write them down below. Are they current problems or hypothetical problems? Classify your worries into these categories.

Disclaimer: The information provided on this sheet does not replace professional medical services. Always seek medical advice if you are experiencing prolonged anxiety and stress or symptoms of depression.

Here are some relaxation and mindfulness techniques you can try to help manage stress.

Progressive relaxation: Intentionally increase then decrease muscle tension

Step 1: Tension

- Focus on a specific muscle group
- Take a slow deep breath and squeeze the muscle as hard as you can for about 5 seconds.

Step 2: Relaxation

- After 5 seconds of tension, exhale and let all the tightness flow out.

Meditation: Concentrate on your breathing

Step 1. Sit or lay comfortably

Step 2. Close your eyes and breathe normally (no effort to control breathing)

Step 3. While breathing normally (not controlling your breathing rhythm), focus on how your body moves and changes with each inhalation and exhalation



Mindfulness: Maintain awareness in the present moment

Take a few deep breathes and focus on three senses: sound, sight, touch. Ask yourself: What are three things I can **hear**, **see** and **feel**?

Visualization: Create mental pictures that calm you down and focus your mind

Step 1. Find a quiet place free from distraction

Step 2. Take a few slow breaths

Step 3. Close your eyes and focus on your relaxing mental picture.

Focus on all your senses on that picture, the sights, sound, and smells.

Risks to brain health:

- Poor diet
- Insufficient sleep
- Lack of physical activity
- Lack of social contact
- Chronic illness: heart disease and diabetes

Ways to protect brain health:

- Be physically active
- Eat healthy foods
- Connect with family, friends, and your community
- Get recommended health screenings
- Manage chronic health conditions
- Do mentally stimulating activities



For more information on managing stress and anxiety, visit www.anxietycanada.com