

r u worried?

a guide to what you can do when
you're feeling worried

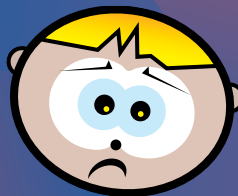
Feeling worried sometimes is normal – we all go through it!

A little worry can be a good thing.

It can give us a push to do important stuff – like a school test or a part in a show.

But too much worry for too long is bad for us.

It affects how we feel in our bodies and minds.

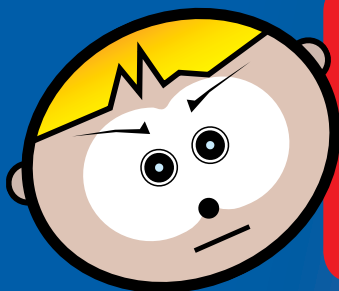


Why do we get worried?

How do we know if we're worried?

What can we do about it?

This leaflet is here to answer these questions. At the back, you'll find details of other places where you can get help and more information if you feel you need it.



You might find these other leaflets handy too:

- **r u sad?** – coping with sadness
- **family break-ups** – coping when parents split up
- **when someone dies** – coping when someone close to you has died

Ask a teacher about them or look in the school library.

Aha! You say you never get worried?

Pull the other one!

Why worry?

Everyone's different: a big worry for one person might not be such a big deal to someone else. That doesn't mean the worry is less real – it's what we feel in ourselves that's important.



Ever had to deal with one of these?

They're all common causes of worry.

- bust-ups with mates
- loneliness
- bullying
- hard times with schoolwork
- parents breaking up
- being ill
- a friend or family member being ill
- someone dying
- moving house
- moving school
- getting a new stepfamily

Changes in our lives or anything that upsets us can cause us to worry.

Panic stations!

What is panic?

Sometimes we feel **very** worried about something. We can feel frightened and unable to cope.



What does panic feel like?

If you are having a panic attack, you might feel some or all of these:

- dry mouth
- feeling breathless
- feeling sick
- needing to pee
- can't concentrate
- fast heartbeat
- upset tummy
- feeling dizzy
- can't think clearly

How long does it last?

Panic usually goes away after a few minutes. It will also go if we get out of the situation that caused the panic.

That might not be a good idea though – especially if we need to get that test done or get on with our part in a show.

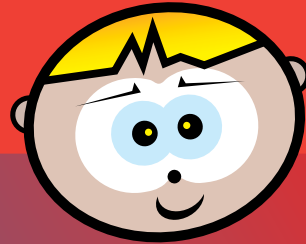
Look at the next page to find out how to beat panic.

Beating panic

Everyone feels panicky sometimes. When we do, our bodies make a chemical called adrenaline. This can make us feel like running away. It also makes our breathing faster and this can make us dizzy.

How can I stop it?

Easy. All you have to do is **breathe**.



First . . .

Find a clock or watch that shows seconds

or

count like this in your head: 'one-hundred-and-one, one-hundred-and-two, one-hundred-and-three' all the way up to 'one-hundred-and-ten'.

Then . . .

- 1 breathe in **slowly** for **ten seconds**
(or count from 'one-hundred-and-one' up to 'one-hundred-and-ten')
- 2 hold it for **two seconds**
- 3 **slowly** breathe all the way out for **ten seconds**
- 4 hold for **two seconds**
- 5 repeat steps 1 to 4 **three times**

Doing this works because it helps us breathe normally again.

It also calms us down by distracting us from the scary thing for a few minutes.

Worry and stress

Everyone has little worries in their daily lives. These usually get sorted quickly and we forget them. Sometimes the worry is stronger. The same worrying thoughts keep coming back and make us feel bad. **This is called stress.**

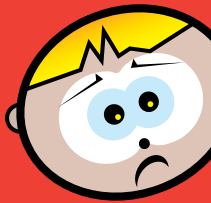
r u stressed?

How many of these describe the way you feel?

- off food
- can't relax
- bad tempered
- upset tummy
- eating more than usual
- not sleeping well
- crying lots
- stiff neck/shoulders



- 2 **Feeling the strain** – relax as soon as you can.
- 3-6 **A bit stressed** – chill out now and talk to someone about your worries.
- 7-8 **Really stressed** – chill and tell an adult how you're feeling right away.



About stress

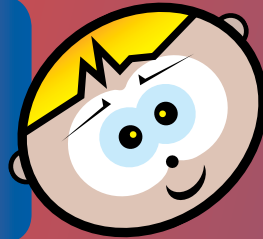
People say they're 'stressed' about all kinds of things – bad hair days or having to do chores. Real stress comes from things that are difficult to cope with. Chores are just annoying.

Get sorted

First step: calm down and chill out

If you're worried, do something you **enjoy** and that **relaxes you**.

- go for a walk
- have a soak in the bath
- stroke a cat or dog
- have a kickabout
- listen to some tunes
- meditate



Everyone's different – keep trying different stuff until you find out what relaxes you best. You might have to try a few different things before you start to feel more relaxed.

Tip: Stress and worry build up. Relax and chill out every single day!

Distract yourself . . .

Block out worrying thoughts by thinking really hard about a pleasant time you once had or something you're looking forward to.

Tip: Activate Physical activity is great for beating worry (and stress). Build up at least an hour of activity on most days of the week. It doesn't all need to be in one go, it can be in chunks of at least 10 minutes.

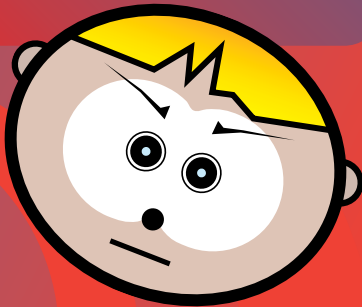
Second step: figure it out

Try to pinpoint what's causing the bother. Sometimes it's obvious but sometimes it's not. You might need some help figuring out what the problem is.

Talk

When we worry, things get muddled. Talk to a parent, friend or trusted adult.

- Talking helps get things straight.
- Sharing thoughts with a friend can cut worries down to size.
- Writing your thoughts out on paper can help too.



Keep notes

When do you feel most worried? Is it in a certain place or at one time of day? These can be clues to what's wrong.

Once you've figured out what's up, think who could help sort it. Some stuff we just have to put up with – compensate by chilling and relaxing more.

Help

Call or email **CHILDLINE** any time with any problem or just to talk to someone: **0800 1111** or visit **www.childline.org.uk**

Fallen out with someone?

Making the first moves to patch things up will help you feel better.

Done something wrong?

Talk through what's happened. Taking steps to put things right will help you feel better.

Worried about schoolwork, bullying or being a bully?

Talk to a teacher – it's their job to help with this stuff.

What about my worried friend?

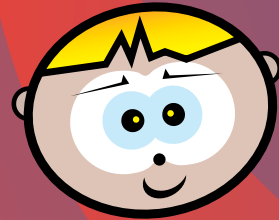
Worried people can be hard to be around. Be patient and let them know they can talk to you. If you've found this leaflet useful, so might they. Let them have a look.

Get help

Ignoring problems only lets them grow – get help as soon as you can.

life = challenges

Learning to cope with the challenges life throws at us makes us stronger. It gives us the courage and confidence to deal with bigger challenges in the future.





Help

Emergencies

Call the police on 999 or textphone 18000.

Ask for a 'child protection police officer' if you're worried about abuse.

Carers' Support Services

Support for people caring for a relative who is unwell or in need of care.

Look in The Phone Book business section under 'carers' for local projects.

Childline

Freephone 0800 1111 – any time – call for advice, information and support on any worry or send an email from www.childline.org.uk

Cruse Bereavement Care

Support and advice for anyone coping with the loss of a friend or relative.

Get in touch for details of a group near you. Call 0808 808 1677

or email helpline@cruse.org.uk

Family Lives

Freephone 0808 800 2222 – information, support and advice for parents.

Help



Who Cares? Scotland

www.whocaresscotland.org

Advice, information, advocacy and local support for young people living in care or who have been in care.

www.actionforchildren.org.uk

information and advice if your parents are splitting up

www.childline.org.uk

Childline website – fact sheets, links, email help, problem pages and more

www.bullying.co.uk

information and advice on bullying

www.headspace.org.au

excellent site with info and advice on friends, stress and more

www.respectme.org.uk

information, advice and links on bullying

Surf safe! never give out your real name, telephone number or address online
visit www.thinkuknow.co.uk for information on using the internet safely

NHS Health Scotland cannot guarantee the quality of information on websites run by other organisations.

We are happy to consider requests for other languages or formats. Please contact 0131 314 5300 or email nhs.healthscotland-alternativeformats@nhs.net

Thanks to the Scottish Mental Health Week Task Group and all the young people who gave their time to the research.

Published by NHS Health Scotland
1 South Gyle Crescent
Edinburgh EH12 9EB

Text: John Wallace (mentalelf.co.uk)
Design: Think-em
ISBN: 978-1-84485-011-2

© NHS Health Scotland 2016
First published 2003

Number 1 in the “r u ok?” series

Adapted, with kind permission, from a series of booklets produced by East Lothian Council in partnership with Lothian Primary Health Care Trust Child and Adolescent Services, Changes Community Health Project, NHS Lothian and the Health Improvement Fund.

www.healthscotland.com

