

Your mental health checklist



Mental health conditions, such as anxiety and depression, can affect anyone. These are some key things to be aware of.



8.6 million

Number of Australians aged 16 to 85 years old who have experienced a mental disorder at some stage in their lives



21.0%

Proportion of Australians aged 45 to 54 who experienced a mental disorder in 2020–21



17.1%

Proportion of Australians aged 55 to 64 who experienced a mental disorder in 2020–21

Most common mental health conditions in 2020–21



Anxiety disorders

16.8%



Affective disorders

7.5%



Substance abuse

3.3%

Changes to watch out for

It's important to keep an eye on your mental health, and to see your doctor if you're noticing negative changes in your feelings, thoughts and experiences.

According to Black Dog Institute, these can include:

- Constantly feeling very worried, nervous, tense or on edge.
- Worrying that you "might be going crazy".
- Increased irritability, agitation or panic.
- A constant churn in your gut, like butterflies, or feeling you may vomit.
- Constantly thinking harmful thoughts, such as "It's all going to go wrong".
- Trouble falling asleep or waking up often.
- Problems with concentrating.

These are just some suggestions for things to look out for. If you're concerned, we recommend you talk to your healthcare professional.

Talking with your GP about your mental health

It's important to talk to your healthcare professional if you're worried about your mental health, but we understand it can be difficult to initiate the conversation. Here are some starting points:

- How you are currently feeling, and how long you've been feeling this way.
- Your symptoms, thoughts and how you feel.
- The impact your mental health is having on your life.
- Your history, lifestyle and any areas of stress that may be relevant to your mental health

These are just some suggestions for things to look out for. If you ever see something unusual, we recommend you talk to your healthcare professional.

Questions to ask your GP

To get the most out of your visit with your GP, it can be useful to have a list of questions to focus the conversation. Here are some to consider:

- Why am I feeling like this?
- What are all my treatment options?
- What are the best options for me?
- When will I feel better?
- What should I do if I need urgent support?
- Is there anyone else I should be seeing?
- Where can I get trusted information?



Where to get help

If you're experiencing mental health issues, your GP, or other healthcare practitioner (like a psychologist or psychiatrist if you already have one), should be your first port of call. If you can't get to a GP straight away or you'd like further information, check out following services.

- **Beyond Blue:** Provides information and support to help people achieve their best possible mental health, including online forums, as well as web chat and telephone support with mental health professionals.
- **BiteBack:** An online positive psychology program for young Australians between 13 and 16 years of age.
- **Black Dog Clinical Services:** Clinicians are available to provide face-to-face and telehealth consultations.
- **Head to Health:** A government website with research-backed online resources and apps for different mental health issues.
- **iBobbly:** A self-help app for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- **MindSpot:** Offers a free telephone and online service for adults of all ages.
- **myCompass:** An online self-help program for people experiencing mild to moderate stress, anxiety and depression.
- **SANE Australia:** Offers connection and support for people with complex mental health conditions, as well as their loved ones.

For more information

australianunity.com.au/wellbeing

Disclaimer

Information provided in this fact sheet is not medical advice and you should consult with your healthcare practitioner. Australian Unity accepts no responsibility for the accuracy of any of the opinions, advice, representations or information contained in this publication. Readers should rely on their own advice and enquiries in making decisions affecting their own health, wellbeing or interest.