

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING





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MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Looking after your mental health is just as important as looking after your physical health. We know from research people with CF are more at risk of anxiety and depression.

Managing treatments, exercise and appointments, and concerns about your future can be challenging and exhausting and staying positive is easier said than done some days.

Feeling worried about some aspects of your life, both right now and in the future, is normal. But if overwhelming worry and sadness is stopping you from enjoying life it's important you ask for support and help. Talking with family, friends, your CF team or another health professional about how you're feeling is important. However, we know it's sometimes hard to ask for help.



ANXIETY

Feeling worried or anxious some of the time is normal. But when anxiety stops you taking part in everyday life and starts to feel all consuming, it's time to ask for help. It can be hard, but it's important you ask for help early. Waiting for it to pass or just trying to get over it isn't a good solution.

Anxiety is a recognised medical condition and often people with anxiety need help from a health professional to learn how to manage it.

Common symptoms of anxiety include:

- Worrying too much than usual.
- Unable to relax.
- Irritable.

- Constant thoughts running through your mind.
- Trouble sleeping.
- Difficulty concentrating.
- Feeling irritable and restless.
- Avoiding certain situations.
- Always expecting the worst to happen.

You may only have a few symptoms but it's still important to reach out. Find someone you trust to share how you're feeling; this may be a friend, family member or health professional.

Anxiety can be treated and your treatment depends on how mild or severe your anxiety is. Treatment can include medications and non-medicine treatment options such as talking therapy, mindfulness and relaxation.

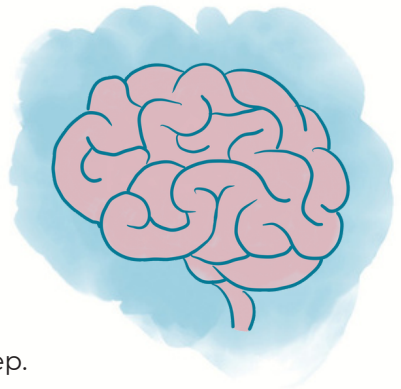
DEPRESSION

Depression is linked to changes in how the brain works. Depression can cause you to feel sad and hopeless which doesn't go away.

Common signs include:

- A persistent low, sad or depressed mood, or feeling empty and without feelings.
- Losing interest in activities you usually enjoy.
- Difficulty concentrating.
- Problems falling asleep or staying asleep.
- Feeling irritable.
- Feeling hopeless, worthless or guilty.
- Thinking about death or suicide.
- Trouble making everyday decisions.

Like anxiety, depression is a recognised medical condition and



without help it can last for weeks, months or years and impact on your whole life.

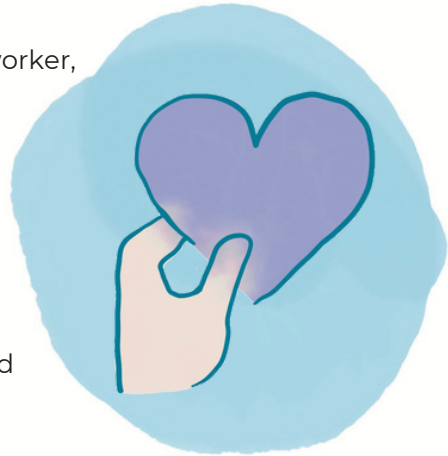
Depression can be treated and what your treatment options are depend on how mild or severe your depression is. Treatment often includes medication and non-medicine treatment such as talking therapy.

Be familiar with the common signs of depression. Having CF increases your risk of developing depression. Left untreated, you're less likely to do your daily treatments, exercise and eat well, which can severely affect your lung function, weight and overall health.

Depression and anxiety can cause you to think about suicide. It's important you recognise these feelings and tell someone about what you're thinking.

Reach out to your CF team, CF fieldworker, doctors or a friend or family member who can help guide you to the support you need. You can also call The Suicide Crisis Helpline on 0508 828 865.

The Mental Health Foundation has New Zealand specific information and support about suicide and where to get help.



WHAT ARE TALKING THERAPIES

Talking therapies are an important non-medication treatment for anxiety and depression. They can help you understand your thoughts, behaviours and feelings and learn ways to make positive changes .

Talk therapies include:

- counselling
- psychotherapy
- cognitive behavioural therapy
- bibliotherapy
- family therapy.

Psychologists are part of some CF teams in New Zealand, but unfortunately not all. Ask your CF fieldworker or CF team if there's a psychologist or mental health professional you can see as part of your overall treatment.

You may be able to access free talking therapies such as counselling or psychotherapy through the public health system. Most GPs are part of Primary Health Organisations that run Government funded mental health programmes so you may be able to access free counselling sessions through this. You may also qualify for free or cheaper counselling sessions through a disability allowance from Work and Income New Zealand, or you can privately pay to see a counsellor or psychologist.

You may need to advocate for yourself to see someone – your CF fieldworker or GP can help.

Therapists are also available privately and their fees can vary.

SUPPORT IN NEW ZEALAND

Talking with family, friends, your CF team or a health professional is a good place to start. Health professionals, including your CF fieldworker can help you access the services you need.

Other ways to find support In New Zealand:

- Need to talk? Free call or text 1737 any time for support from a trained counsellor.
- Depression helpline: freephone 0800 111 757.
- Healthline: 0800 611 116 (Available 24 hours, 7 days a week and free to callers throughout New Zealand, including from a mobile phone).

- Lifeline: 0800 543 35, offers counselling and support.
- Samaritans: 0800 726 666.

ANXIETY TRUST NEW ZEALAND

The Anxiety Trust New Zealand provides support and treatment for people with anxiety and depression. They offer a range of services and its website has lots of resources and information.

Some of its services are free. Other services such as one on one appointments you have to pay for. If you're a student or on a low income you may qualify for funding for up to 30 appointments with a psychologist and some health insurance plans cover psychologist appointments .

anxiety.org.nz

The Anxiety Trust NZ also has a 24/7 helpline:
0800 269 4389

THE MENTAL HEALTH FOUNDATION

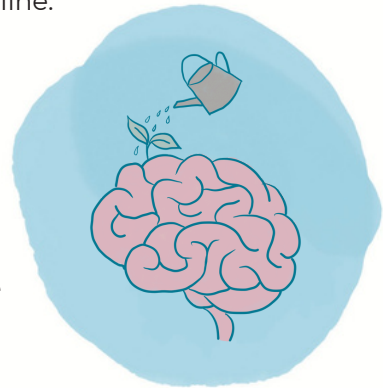
The Mental Health Foundation of New Zealand is a charity that supports people to improve and sustain their mental health and reach their full potential.

The Mental Health Foundation website has resources and information about anxiety and depression, as well as other mental health conditions. These are relevant for all New Zealanders and also offer support groups and information about staying mentally well.

mentalhealth.org.nz

Also on the website is a great list of apps, e-therapy and guided self-help resources you can discover at your own pace:

mentalhealth.org.nz/get-help/a-z/apps-e-therapy-and-guided-self-help/



THE LOWDOWN

Straight up answers for when life sucks. The Lowdown is a New Zealand website that provides information and support for a range of life's challenges, including anxiety, depression, grief and loss and relationships.

thelowdown.co.nz



DEPRESSION.ORG.NZ

Depression.org.nz is a New Zealand website focusing on helping Kiwis understand depression and ways you can get help. It also offers a free, personalised online programme called The Journal which takes you through a series of online lessons to create lifestyle changes to improve your mental health.

depression.org.nz

MENTEMIA

Mentemia is a New Zealand app that offers you evidence-based ideas and tools to help you learn how to be well and stay well. It's free for all New Zealanders.

mentemia.co.nz





I'm not scared of dying. I think having CF has helped me pack lots of stuff into my life so far.




As I've got older and lost lung function, actually feeling the decline has been tough at times on my mental health. Sometimes there is such a clear link between a low state of mind and having a chest infection I just have to stop and remind myself, my mood doesn't define me, tomorrow will feel different, and once the chest infection is under control my entire outlook is brighter.


I've found also as I get older, being open about CF has helped me deal with uncomfortable situations around coughing etc, and I take it as an opportunity to educate people.

Another thing that's helped at times is being sure to also challenge myself and get outside of my comfort zone. With CF (and probably without), it's easy to find excuses why not to do things, for example, 'I can't go to yoga class because I'll cough too much', or 'I can't possibly commit to an adventure race, what if I have a chest infection the day of the race?' There's usually a work around and often the worst-case scenario isn't that bad if you've planned for it. And of course, best case scenarios are lots of reward, growing in confidence and choosing goals that help motivate you to stay healthy.

I've also made use of the CF psychologists numerous times. Even if it hasn't felt great to reach out to a stranger, I think it can be another example to yourself at least that you're taking charge of your health, and snapping up as many opportunities to be well as possible.

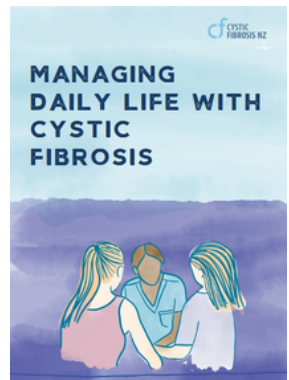
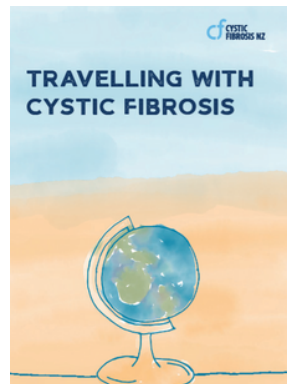
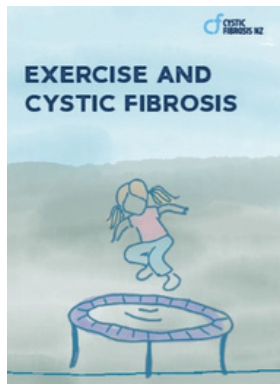
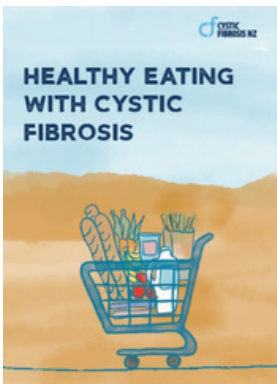


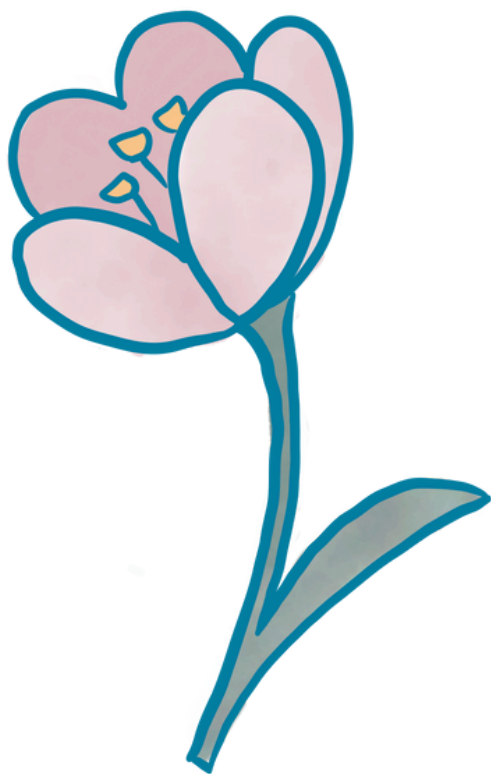
I only get a bit down when I'm sick because I have to stay in bed and can't see my mates. The rest of the time I'm okay.



DOCUMENTS IN THE ADULT GUIDE SET:

Click on icon to below to view other resources.





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