



## Patient Education Sheet

Oncology Nursing Society  
125 Enterprise Drive  
Pittsburgh, PA 15275-1214  
+1-412-859-6100  
USA  
[www.ons.org](http://www.ons.org)



# How Can I Manage Anxiety?

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Anxiety is an emotional or physiologic response that can affect decision making, impair treatment adherence, and affect quality of life. Two types of anxiety can occur: generalized anxiety disorder and post-traumatic stress disorder.

Here are simple tips and techniques that you can discuss with your healthcare provider to relieve anxiety.

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## Most Helpful

- **Psychoeducation:** Treatments in this category include patient-centered education materials about specific types of cancer and treatments, treatment-centered orientation programs to describe the facility and staff, and symptom management and self-care strategies to teach exercise and relaxation techniques.
- **Psychosocial treatments:** Treatments include cognitive behavioral therapy, individual or group psychotherapy sessions, and psychosocial support group meetings.

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## Likely to Be Helpful

- **Medications:** Studies over the past 20 years have examined a variety of drugs, such as antidepressants and benzodiazepines, to help treat anxiety in patients with cancer. However, few studies have had enough participants to accurately determine which agents are most effective.
- **Massage therapy:** Manipulation of soft tissue in the body may help to relieve stress and tension, aid in sleep disorders, and diminish cancer-related depression. Several studies have found a decrease in patient anxiety immediately after a massage therapy session.

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## Not Enough Evidence

Although you may find that these techniques work for you, not enough studies have been done to show that they work to alleviate anxiety.

- Art therapy
- Complementary and integrative medicines
- Distraction (virtual reality or music)
- Exercise
- Foot reflexology
- Homeopathy
- Meditation
- Progressive muscle relaxation

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*(continued)*

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## Not Enough Evidence (*continued*)

- Reiki
- Relaxation breathing techniques
- Therapeutic touch

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## Questions for Your Healthcare Provider

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*Always consult your healthcare provider before adding any new treatments or other interventions into your routine.*

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