

Worry less for better health

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Do you worry a lot? Besides the anxiety it's causing you emotionally, it can threaten your health.

Whether you worry over actual problems or the fear of future ones, it interferes with sleep and quality of life. And, according to research done at Case Western Reserve University, it can be so intrusive that it harms your important relationships, too.

Here's what you can do to ease your worries and protect your mental and [physical health](#).

Take action for true concerns. For instance, if you're worried about money for retirement, learn more about investments. Work with a certified financial planner to help you meet goals.

If you're nervous about a [health condition](#) or an upcoming medical test, bone up on the procedure, experts at the University of California, Berkeley, suggest. Don't be afraid to ask your medical providers questions so you understand what you've read and how it applies to you.

On the other hand, if you find that you look for things to worry about and can't seem to shake the bad habit, try to lose yourself in exercise. Physical activity boosts mood and improves [health](#)—that's one less worry right there.

You might also investigate mindfulness, a technique that teaches you to live in the moment and not worry about "what ifs." There are self-help approaches to try on your own, or you can work with a therapist to learn ways to turn off worrying by retraining your attention.

People who aren't overwhelmed by worry use [positive thoughts](#) or actions to keep negative ones at bay. So look for activities you can do to divert your attention rather than letting worry increase and overtake your practical side.

More information: Mindful.org has more on [mindfulness meditation](#) and how to practice it.

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