

Scanxiety

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What is scanxiety?

Scanxiety is the nervousness and dread that you may experience before, during and while waiting for results.

Scans are associated with:

- The trauma of diagnosis
 - Fear of cancer returning or progression
 - A change in therapeutic approach
 - Discomfort and confinement
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How can you manage scanxiety?

Days before the scan

- Know your own signs of scanxiety
 - Label it and acknowledge it as scanxiety
 - See the people you like –if possible, avoid other stressful situations
 - Do regular exercise, meditation and relaxation
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- Eat a healthy diet. Sugar and caffeine will make anxiety worse
- Prepare yourself with information you need for the scan, such as a referral letter or fasting requirements
- Wherever possible schedule your scan in the morning for fewer delays

During the scan

- Bring along a support person
- Use distraction. Try to focus on something else such as trying to list all the movies you saw in the last year or remembering family members birthdates
- Practice meditation
- Medication can help
- Talk to the technician about your anxiety

While you wait for results

- Do things you enjoy (make plans and keep busy)
- Talk to your support persons or cancer support groups
- Meditate and practice relaxation
- Help someone else out. Helping others makes us feel good about ourselves
- Use helpful self-talk (Try not to predict the outcome, remind yourself that you are resilient and that you can cope)

Further information and support services

Further information

PanCare Foundation: Managing cancer scanxiety article

[Visit Website](#)

Melanoma Patients Australia: Scanxiety article

[Visit Website](#)

Finding a mental health professional

You can begin by speaking to your General Practitioner (GP). GPs can discuss your emotional concerns with you and can link you to supports in the local community, such as a psychologist or social worker.

You can also speak to your cancer clinician. Most cancer services have a range of psychological support options including psychologists, social workers, psychiatric nurses and psychiatrists. If this isn't available at your local health service, ask them what support is available in the local community.

You can find a local Psychologist with a referral or a mental health care plan from your GP.

Search for a local Psychologist

[Visit Website](#)

Search for a local Psychiatrist

[Visit Website](#)

Health Direct

Health Direct provides information about what a mental health care plan is and how you can work with your GP to access a mental health care plan.

[Visit Website](#)

Relaxation and mindfulness

Cancer Council NSW – Finding calm during cancer

Meditation and relaxation practices

[Visit Website](#)

Headspace

Meditation and mindfulness app

[Visit Website](#)

Smiling Mind

Web and app-based meditation program

[Visit Website](#)

Cancer support services

Cancer Council Victoria

A non-profit cancer charity organisation involved in cancer research, patient support, cancer prevention and advocacy.

[Call 13 11 20 to speak with a cancer nurse](#)

[Visit Website](#)

[Support Groups](#)

[Cancer Connect peer support](#)

[Online Community](#)

WeCan

A supportive care website

[Visit Website](#)

Telephone support services

Beyond Blue

All calls are with a trained mental health professional, and completely confidential. They will only ask you your first name and you can remain completely anonymous.

[Phone: 1300 224 636](#)

[Visit Website](#)

Lifeline

Lifeline provides all Australians experiencing a personal crisis have access to 24-hour crisis support by trained professional

[Phone: 13 11 14](tel:131114)

[Visit Website](#)

Disclaimer

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Content is sourced from published research literature, grey literature sources (e.g. clinical guidelines) and opinions of clinical experts. It is not intended to reflect all of the available evidence and is not intended to be exhaustive.

The authors acknowledge that it is possible that other relevant guidelines or scientific findings may have been published since the development of the website.