

While you wait

Advice while you wait for your mental health assessment

Try following the **SELF** care steps:

Sleep

Ensure that you are getting enough sleep each night. Sometimes our thoughts and physical feelings can overwhelm us, causing us difficulty in getting off to sleep, staying asleep or not sleeping at all. Ensuring good sleep helps improve both physical and mental wellbeing. Ensure good sleep hygiene by reducing caffeine, sleeping in a dark room with minimal sound and keeping to a regular routine.



www.sleepio.com/nhs

NHS sleep hygiene: <https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/how-to-fall-asleep-faster-and-sleep-better/> (see page 3 for QR codes)

Eating

Maintaining a healthy diet allows you to feel good about yourself and provides you with energy. Skipping meals or eating unhealthily will have an impact on both mental and physical health, energy levels and motivation.

Exercise

Being active increases energy levels, improves mood and reduces stress. It improves physical health and allows us to burn off excess energy caused by increased anxiety. Going for a walk, a run, to the gym or a swim are all ways to improve our mood by doing something productive and feeling better about ourselves.

Looking at drugs

Using substances can alter our thinking, influence our behaviours and make the situation worse. Non-prescribed medications can interact with medications which have been prescribed to help with how you are feeling, which can influence their effect on the body.

West Lothian Drug and Alcohol Services (WLDAS): 01506430225

Looking at alcohol

Regularly consuming alcohol, caffeine and carbonated drinks can affect your mental health. When experiencing stress and anxiety as well as low mood, you may be more tempted to drink more alcohol than normal. However, it can make you feel worse. Reducing or stopping consuming alcohol can improve mood as well as physical health.

Drinkline: This is a free, confidential helpline that you can call if you are worried about your own or someone else's drinking: **0300 123 1110**

Find something that gives you a sense of achievement

Ensuring that each day you complete a wide range of activities will help you feel like you have made the most of the day. **Do** things you enjoy, by yourself or with others. **Do** something which gives you a feeling of purpose, whether that be work or completing household chores. **Do** something which makes you feel better about yourself. **Do** something which increases your energy, exercise or reaching out to others. Try improving your sleep and take time to relax.

Mood management and self-help

Seeking out others

Remaining close to family and friends can help improve our mood and anxiety. Ensuring that you have good support around you and people that you can confide in about your difficulties will help you feel like you can get better. Having others support makes you feel like you are not alone.

Breathing exercises

These can provide immediate and long-term relief from stress and anxiety. Breathing techniques activate your body's relaxation response and relieve stress:

Inhale: Breathe in slowly through your nose for 4 seconds

Pause: Hold the breath in your lungs for 4 seconds

Exhale: Breathe out slowly through your mouth for 6 seconds

Support groups and third sector organisations can also be helpful:

ANDY'S MAN'S CLUB (Bathgate, Craigsfarm and Broxburn):

<https://andysmanclub.co.uk/> Mondays 7pm (Except holidays).



DASAT (Domestic and Sexual Assault team): A Multi-agency partnership to support those suffering domestic abuse, coercive control, rape and sexual assault.

<https://westlothianhsc.org.uk/article/28189/Domestic-Violence-and-Sexual-Abuse>



Mental health advocacy services: An independent advocacy service for people experiencing mental health problems and/or addiction problems who live in West Lothian.

www.mhapwl.org



The Advice Shop: Debt counselling service. Tel: **01506 776 459 / 01506 776 444.**

www.westlothian.gov.uk/advice-shop



WLDAS Family support Service: For those whose mental health is impacted by looking after someone with substance or alcohol issues. Tel: **01506 430225**

West Lothian Well-being: This project connects adults (18+) in West Lothian experiencing mild to moderate mental health issues with local partners which can offer you support and advice. Email: info@westlothianwell-being.org.uk

West space: West Lothian's online source of mental health and wellbeing information.

www.westspace.org.uk



Apps and Websites

There are some helpful apps that you can download for free for relaxation and self-help:



www.calm.com



www.feelinggood.app/



www.trydaylight.com/nhs



www.headspace.com/nhs



www.mind.org.uk/



www.sleepio.com/nhs





www.my-therappy.co.uk/app/virtual-hope-box



<https://www.rainrainapp.com/>



<https://insighttimer.com/en-gb>



Couch to 5k NHS: www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/running-and-aerobic-exercises/get-running-with-couch-to-5k/



Mindfulness sessions can be found at:

<https://oxfordmindfulness.org/online-sessions-podcasts/>



NHS sleep hygiene: <https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/how-to-fall-asleep-faster-and-sleep-better/>

