

Looking after your mental and emotional health



What is the cardiac blues?

It's normal to experience a range of emotions after a heart attack or diagnosis of heart disease. You might feel sad, angry, anxious, lonely or confused. These feelings are common and normal - there's even a name for it, the 'cardiac blues'.

Common symptoms of the cardiac blues can include:



Feeling disconnected from others



Feeling low, tearful or emotional



Changes in sleep or appetite



Feeling confused, forgetful or unable to concentrate



Ongoing worry about your heart

For many people, these feelings usually go away in the first couple of weeks. However, if your mood is not improving, or is getting worse, it's important to seek help. Start by talking to your doctor (GP) or someone in your healthcare team about the options available or reach out to any of the support services below.

Scan the QR code to listen to health psychologist Dr Rosemary Higgins as she talks about the cardiac blues and where to go for support if you are feeling stressed, worried or helpless after your heart event or diagnosis.



Support Services

Lifeline	Cardiac Psychology Clinic	Medicare Mental Health	Beyond Blue	WellMob
For confidential crisis support via phone, text or online chat call Lifeline on 13 11 14.	Available Australia-wide for people diagnosed with a heart condition (fees apply). Phone (03) 9546 0009 or visit the NeuroCentrix website: neurocentrix.com.au/cardiac-psychology-clinic	A free service (funded by the Australian Government) that provides access to mental health professionals. Call 1800 595 212 or visit the website: medicarementalhealth.gov.au	Provides a free telephone and online counselling service 24/7. Call 1300 22 4636 or visit the website: beyondblue.org.au	Provides online social, emotional and cultural wellbeing resources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Visit: wellmob.org.au/



Join the MyHeart MyLife support program to learn more about how to manage your heart health and live well with heart disease. Scan the QR code or visit myheartmylife.org.au

When was the last time you checked in on your emotional wellbeing?

Living well with heart disease is not just about taking care of your physical health; it is also important to consider your emotions. The good news is that there are steps you can take to help with your recovery and emotional wellbeing.

Develop healthy habits

Healthy eating, exercise and sleep support emotional health. You don't need to make big changes all at once. Go at a pace that feels right for you and celebrate your achievements no matter how small.



Get to know your new self

The 'you' as you know it has possibly changed, and this can feel unsettling. Instead of comparing what you used to do, or what you think you should be doing, focus on your strengths. Take the time to get to know who you are now – you might even find a new and improved version of yourself!

Connect with others

After you heart event, you might feel isolated or disconnected, but there are ways to overcome this.

1

Lean on your family and friends

Family and friends can offer support when needed. If distance is an issue, stay connected by text, call or video chat.

2

Discover your local community

Connect with people in your community through shared interests. Check councils, libraries and local Facebook pages for opportunities in your area.

3

Connect through peer support

Peer support helps you connect, share experiences and feel less alone. If no local groups are available, we have a Facebook group ready for you to join.



Join a community that cares

Become part of our **MyHeart MyLife** online community to connect with other people across Australia living with a heart condition and those caring for them.



This program was developed with funding received from the Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing.

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