

Your Employee Assistance Program is a support service that can help you take the first step toward change.

When is Anger Out of Control?

Anger is an emotion, not a behavior. It is a feeling we all experience. On occasion, anger can even be a positive emotion, producing the adrenaline required to protect ourselves or our loved ones against danger. More commonly, however, anger leads to negative behavior, which is why most people try to control angry emotions.

When anger gets out of control, the results can be violence, emotional abuse or self-abuse. The longer-term consequences of anger are believed to contribute to heart disease, high blood pressure, and other stress-related diseases.

Learning how to identify when normal anger crosses this line and becomes a problem, is key to finding a solution. You have made a great start in taking this first step.

You may have anger issues that are out of control if you experience the following:

- Displaying anger on a daily basis
- Feeling constantly disrespected
- Feeling rejected
- Believing the world is against you
- Constant irritation with others
- High levels of impatience
- High levels of frustration
- Feeling revengeful and planning retaliation
- Increasing reliance on alcohol or drugs
- Losing friends
- Increasing risk-taking
- Withdrawal from family and friends
- Smashing or throwing things
- Emotionally abusing others
- Physically abusing others
- Abusing animals
- Sleep problems
- Carrying a weapon

In children and teens, anger issues can show up as some of the following behaviors:

- Constant loss of temper
- Frequent punching, hitting, kicking
- Physical fighting with siblings and in school
- Bullying, including name-calling
- Belligerence when thwarted
- Overt defiance
- Association with trouble-makers
- Abusive language
- Difficulty sleeping
- Destruction of property
- Cruelty to animals
- Risk-taking behavior

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- Use of alcohol or drugs
- Withdrawal from family and friends
- Threats of violence or plans for retaliation
- Self-mutilation
- Carrying a weapon

Out-of-control anger can have dangerous consequences. For more on how to keep your anger in check, and suggestions on how to get beyond feeling so angry, search for other articles with the term “anger” in this library. If you feel at all unsafe at any point, seek urgent outside intervention.