

Reassurance

'Reassurance' refers to the act of reducing a person's fear, anxiety, or uncertainty by providing comfort, information, or supportive communication.

In clinical practice

Reassurance is a core component of the patient-clinician relationship. It may involve:

- Explaining that a symptom is **not dangerous**
- Providing **normal test results**
- Offering a **clear diagnosis and plan**
- Using empathetic language to **reduce emotional distress**

Types

- **Cognitive reassurance** – Providing logical explanations or evidence to correct misunderstandings (e.g., "Your MRI is normal.")
- **Affective reassurance** – Providing emotional support and empathy (e.g., "I understand why you're worried.")

Risks of false reassurance

- May delay diagnosis if symptoms are dismissed
- Can undermine trust if problems later emerge
- May result in **reassurance-seeking behavior** in health anxiety

'In summary:' reassurance is a helpful clinical tool when used responsibly, combining accurate information with emotional support to alleviate distress without minimizing legitimate concerns.

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Last update: **2025/06/15 11:16**

