

WHAT IS ANXIETY DISORDER?

Occasional anxiety is normal, but people with anxiety disorders frequently have intense, excessive, and persistent worry and fear about everyday situations. Often, anxiety disorders involve repeated and sudden episodes of intense anxiety, fear, or terror that reach a peak within minutes (panic attacks).

These feelings of anxiety and panic interfere with daily activities, are difficult to control, are out of proportion to the actual danger, and can last a long time. Sufferers of anxiety disorders may avoid certain places or situations to prevent these feelings.



WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

- Feeling nervous, restless, or tense
- Feeling a sense of impending danger, panic, or doom
- Having an increased heart rate
- Breathing rapidly (hyperventilation)
- Sweating
- Trembling
- Feeling weak or tired
- Trouble concentrating or thinking about anything other than the present worry
- Having trouble sleeping
- Having an upset stomach or other problems with digestion
- Having difficulty controlling worry
- Feeling the urge to avoid things that trigger anxiety

RESOURCES

ANXIETY & DEPRESSION ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

adaa.org

ANXIETY RESOURCE CENTER

www.anxietyresourcecenter.org

CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL

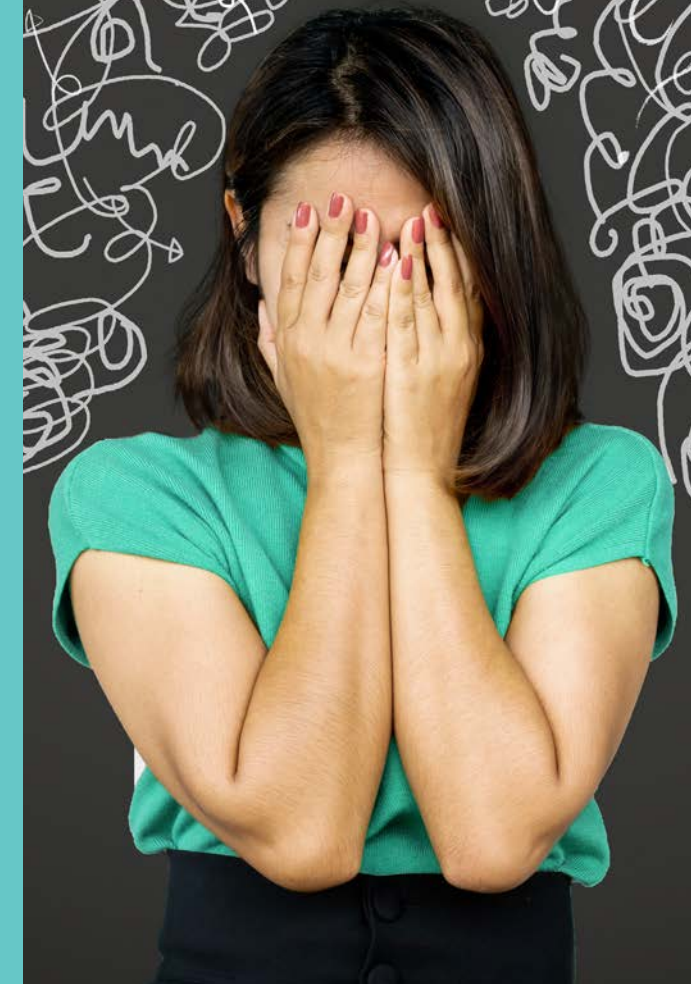
www.cdc.gov

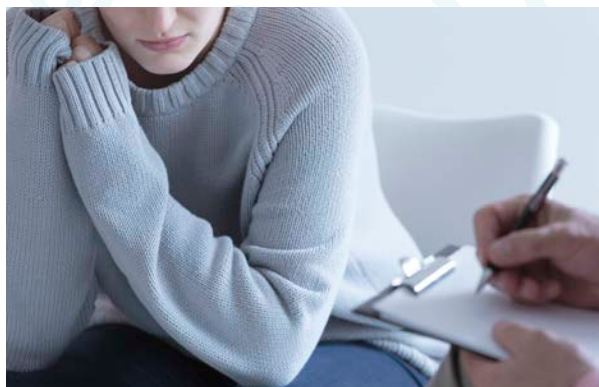
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ANXIETY

CALM EXISTS
WITHIN YOU





If you are having suicidal thoughts, call or text 9-8-8 to reach the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline



WHEN SHOULD YOU SEE A DOCTOR?

See your doctor if:

- You are worrying too much and it's interfering with your work, relationships, or other parts of your life.
- Your fear, worry, or anxiety is upsetting to you and difficult to control.
- You are depressed, have trouble with alcohol or drug use, or have other mental health concerns along with anxiety.
- Your anxiety could be linked to a physical health problem.

MEDICAL TREATMENT

Psychotherapy

Talk therapy or psychological counseling involves working with a therapist to reduce anxiety symptoms.

Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) is the most effective form of psychotherapy for anxiety disorders. CBT teaches specific skills to improve symptoms and gradually return to the activities you've avoided due to anxiety.

Exposure therapy involves gradually encountering the object or situation that triggers anxiety to build confidence that you can manage the situation and symptoms.

Medications

Several types of medications are used to help relieve symptoms, depending on the type of anxiety disorder you have and whether you also have other mental or physical health issues.

Antidepressants

Medications used to treat depression, such as selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs), may also be used for anxiety.

Anti-anxiety medication

In limited circumstances, medications such as sedatives or beta blockers may be prescribed. These medications are for short-term relief of anxiety symptoms and are not intended to be used long-term.

Talk with your doctor about the benefits, risks, and possible side effects of medications.



LIFESTYLE TREATMENT

Anxiety disorders usually require medical treatment, but lifestyle changes can make a difference.

Keep physically active. Develop a routine so that you're physically active most days of the week.

Avoid alcohol and recreational drugs. These substances can cause or worsen anxiety.

Quit smoking and cut back or quit drinking caffeinated beverages.

Use stress management and relaxation techniques. Visualization techniques, meditation, and yoga can ease anxiety.

Make sleep a priority. If you aren't sleeping well, see your doctor.

Eat healthy. Healthy eating — such as focusing on vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and fish — may be linked to reduced anxiety, but more research is needed.



COPING AND SUPPORT

To cope with an anxiety disorder:

- Learn about your disorder. Talk to your doctor or mental health provider.
- Stick to your treatment plan. Take medications as directed. Keep therapy appointments and complete any assignments your therapist gives you.
- Take action. Learn what triggers your anxiety or causes you stress. Practice strategies to deal with anxious feelings.
- Keep a journal. Keeping track of what's causing anxiety and what seems to help can be an invaluable tool..
- Join a support group. Remember that you aren't alone.
- Socialize. Don't let worries isolate you from loved ones or activities.
- Break the cycle. When you feel anxious, take a brisk walk or delve into a hobby to refocus your mind.

