



## ANXIETY

- Occasional anxiety is a normal part of life. However, anxiety disorders create intense, excessive, and persistent worry and fear about everyday situations with repeated episodes of sudden feelings of intense anxiety and fear or terror that reach a peak within minutes (*panic attacks*).
- 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 causing avoidance of places or situations to prevent these feelings.
- Anxiety can result from a hormonal imbalance or medical condition that need treatment.

### Anxiety Disorders Include:

- General Anxiety Disorder
- Social Anxiety Disorder (*Social Phobia*)
- Specific Phobias
- Separation Anxiety Phobia

### Common Anxiety Signs & Symptoms Include:

- Feeling nervous, restless or tense
- Having 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
- Experiencing gastrointestinal (GI) problems
- Having difficulty controlling worry
- Having the urge to avoid things that trigger anxiety

### Several types of anxiety disorders exist:

- Agoraphobia
- Anxiety disorder
- Generalized anxiety disorder
- Panic disorder
- Social anxiety disorder
- Specific phobias
- Substance-induced anxiety disorder

### Causes

- **Life experiences**-Traumatic events appear to trigger anxiety disorders in people who are already prone to anxiety. *Inherited genes can also be a factor.*
- **Medical causes**-Anxiety may be linked to an underlying health issue and can be the first indicators of a medical illness.

*However, the causes of anxiety disorders aren't fully understood.*

Examples of medical problems that can be linked to anxiety include:

- Heart disease
- Diabetes
- Thyroid problems, such as hyperthyroidism
- Respiratory disorders, such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and asthma
- Drug misuse or withdrawal
- Withdrawal from alcohol, anti-anxiety medications (benzodiazepines) or other medications
- Chronic pain or irritable bowel syndrome
- Rare tumors that produce certain fight-or-flight hormones
- Sometimes anxiety can be a side effect of certain medications.

### Risk Factors

- **Trauma**-Children who endured abuse, trauma or witnessed traumatic events are at higher risk of developing an anxiety disorder at some point in their lives. Adults who experience a traumatic event also can develop anxiety disorders.
- **Stress due to an illness**-Having a health condition or serious illness can cause significant worry about issues such as your treatment and your future.
- **Stress buildup**-A big event or a buildup of smaller stressful life situations may trigger excessive

anxiety – for example, a death in the family, work stress or ongoing worry about finances.

- **Personality**-People with certain personality types are more prone to anxiety disorders.
- **Other mental health disorders**-People with other mental health disorders, such as depression, often also have an anxiety disorder.
- **Having blood relatives with an anxiety disorder**-Anxiety disorders can run in families.
- **Drugs or alcohol**-Drug or alcohol use, misuse or withdrawal can cause or worsen anxiety.

### Complications

Having an anxiety disorder can cause you to worry but can also lead to or worsen other mental and physical conditions, such as:

- Depression (*which often occurs with an anxiety disorder*) or other mental health disorders
- Substance Misuse
- Trouble Sleeping (insomnia)
- Digestive or Bowel Problems
- Headaches & Chronic Pain
- Social Isolation
- Problems Functioning at School or Work
- Poor Quality of Life (QOL)
- Suicide

### Prevention

There's no way to predict what will cause someone to develop an anxiety disorder. However, you can take steps to reduce the impact of symptoms if you're feeling anxious:

- **Early Intervention**-Anxiety can become more difficult to treat if you wait.
- **Stay Active**-Participate in activities that you enjoy and that make you feel good about yourself. Enjoy social interaction and caring relationships, which can lessen your worries.
- **Avoid Alcohol or Drug Use**-Alcohol and drug use can cause or worsen anxiety. If you're addicted to any of these substances, quitting can make you anxious. If you can't quit on your own, see your healthcare provider for help.

### Psychotherapy

- **Talk Therapy/Psychological Counseling**-Psychotherapy involves working with a therapist to reduce your anxiety symptoms.
- **Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)**-Most effective form of psychotherapy for anxiety disorders. Generally a short-term treatment, CBT focuses on teaching you specific skills to improve your symptoms and gradually return to the activities you've avoided because of anxiety.
- **Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Exposure Therapy**-Gradually encounter the object or situation that triggers your anxiety so you build confidence that you can manage the situation and anxiety 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. For example:

- **Antidepressants**
- **Anti-anxiety Medication**
- **CBD Products**-CBD products including full spectrum, Delta 8 & Delta 9 are excellent for combatting the symptoms attributed with anxiety and anxiety disorders. Speak with your healthcare provider to discuss which is the better option for you.
- Adrenal support supplements.

### When To See Your Healthcare Professional

- You think your anxiety could be linked to a physical health problem.
- Your fear, worry or anxiety is upsetting to you and difficult to control.
- You are worrying too much and it's interfering with your work, relationships or other parts of your life.
- You feel depressed, have trouble with alcohol or drug use, or have other mental health concerns along with anxiety.
- You have suicidal thoughts or behaviors – *if this is the case, seek emergency treatment immediately.*